Entertainment / A28

Noranians say their idol being framed by powerful people

World / A10

Maid says Jacko shared bed, showered with boy

Inquest Files

INQuest

No one should know...

World / A10

Parliament chooses Kurdish leader interim president of Iraq

BYLINE INQUIRER

Dali ngari sa Bohol! Isang travel special

ALAS 11 NG GABI, SA ABC

Russian senator finds RP truly 'Pearl of Orient'

E... PEARL OF THE ORIENT BA YAN?

By Luige A. del Puerto

THIS RUSSIAN lawmaker has discovered the Philippine as "The Pearl of the Orient"—literally.

When she goes back to her country, Sen. Valentina

RUSSIAN/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Palace confirms military keeping eye on media groups

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

MALACAÑANG yesterday admitted that the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) and the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) were covered by military surveillance, but denied that

PALACE/ A6

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Thursday, April 7, 2005 ★★ 40 pages 3 sections Vol. 20 No. 118 P18

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Time stops in Eternal City

Conclave to elect pope begins April 18

VATICAN CITY—Rome faces paralysis as an ocean of pilgrims from around the world flowed into the city to pay their respects to Pope John Paul II.

Police were forced to shut off major city highways to accommodate the crowds, creating a domino-effect of traffic chaos across the city.

Authorities said as many as 5 million were eventually expected to come to Rome to pay homage to the Pope, surpassing the city's own 3 million residents.

As many as 1 million pilgrims have filed past the Pontiff's body since it was laid in St. Peter's Basilica on Monday, and news agency Ansa said almost 1 million more were queuing in streets around the Vatican yesterday to catch a glimpse.

Undeterred by a wait of up to 15 hours, hundreds of thousands of faithful stood packed together in line to enter St. Peter's Basilica where the Pope's body lay on a simple bier near the crypt where he will be buried on Friday.

"I never, ever expected to take this long, but I have no regrets," said Andres Chnostowski, a 36-year-old Polish immigrant living in Italy, as early morning fog shrouded the vast, 16th-century basilica.

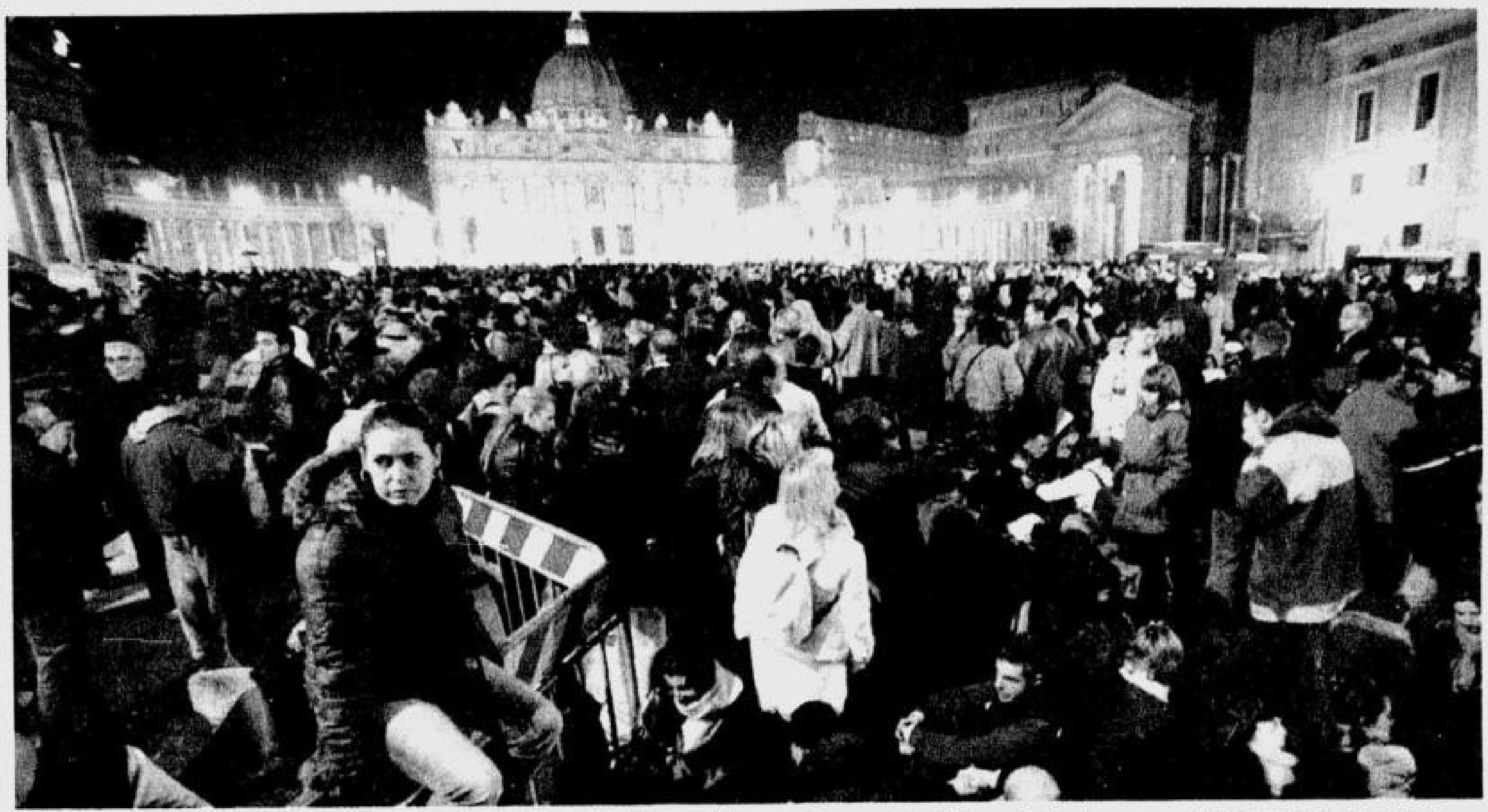
The line snaked through winding side streets to reach the wide boulevard leading to the basilica. Civil Defense authorities said the line was about 2 kilometers long.

Near the middle of the line, a group of people that tried to cut in was jeered by the crowd, which shouted "Get Away."

One group of women, who flew in from the Mediterranean island of Sardinia, ate breakfast on the steps of the church after their 12-hour wait. "We came all the way from Sardinia; we could not give up," said Maria Ruia.

A couple keeping warm by wrapping them-

TIME/ A18



A FLOOD OF HUMANITY spans 2 km outside St. Peter's Basilica waiting in the cold, so many for more than 15 hours, for that one moment to file past the body of their beloved Pope. It is estimated that half a million mourners have so far paid their final respects. Authorities will close the queue on Wednesday, 10 p.m. (4 a.m., Thursday). AFP

Mystery cardinal's name not in Pope's last will

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II did not reveal the name of a cardinal he nominated two years ago but whose identity he kept secret, the Vatican said Wednesday.

"I can confirm that the Holy Father did not reveal the name" of the cardinal known in Church parlance as 'in pectore,' or in the heart, said Vatican spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls.

Valls also announced that the College of Cardinals set the conclave to begin on April 18.

He said the cardinals, who have converged on the Vatican to elect a successor to Pope John Paul II, had read John Paul's spiritual will and testament during a pre-conclave meeting Wednesday.

In it, the late Pope did not name the mystery cardinal he created in 2003, the spokesperson said, ending speculation that a last-minute cardinal might join in the conclave. Valls said the 15-page document will be made public today in Polish and Italian.

John Paul created the cardinal in his last consistory. The formula is used when the Pope wants to name a cardinal from a country where the church is oppressed. There had been speculation that the cardinal might be a prelate from China, where the authorities only recognize a state-sanctioned church.

The late Pope wrote the testament in various phases of his papacy, according

MYSTERY/ A6

THE HEADS of state of the world's tiniest, independent states, the Vatican and Monaco, are now larger than life in death. REUTERS

Prince Rainier III of Monaco dies; 81

MONACO—Prince Rainier of Monaco died on Wednesday at the age of 81 after a month in hospital fighting heart, lung and kidney problems, ending a life marked by Hollywood glamour after his marriage to Grace Kelly.

The prince died at 6:35 a.m., a palace official told Agence France-Presse.

Rainier—who ruled the tiny Mediterranean principality since 1949 and was the world's second longest-reigning monarch after the king of Thailand—was hospitalized on March 7. He had been treated several times in recent years for heart and breathing difficulties.

His condition took a sudden turn for the worse nearly two weeks ago. On Thursday the state's royal council decreed that Rainier was no longer in a position to "exercise his duties," and said that his only son Albert was taking over as regent.

After the death was announced, church bells tolled across the principality, which is smaller than New York's Central Park. Television and radio stations in the principality interrupted normal programs to air classical music and tributes to the late sovereign.

He will be remembered as a "builder prince" and for leaving a legacy of five decades of stability, said English-language Riviera Radio.

The flag above the royal

PRINCE/ A8

GMA handpicked her Vatican party for 14-hr flight, says Malacañang

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG said President Macapagal-Arroyo personally handpicked her co-passengers on a non-stop Philippine Airlines flight to Rome but it had kept the list of official and non-official delegates under wraps. It confirmed only a few names.

PAL flight PR 001 left shortly before midnight.

The entourage included Church leaders, politicians and their wives, diplomats, government officials, daughter of Ms Arroyo, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

Media personalities were also onboard.

Malacañang has so far identified the five members of the President's official delegation—Batangas Rep. Hermilando Mandanas, Philippine Ambassador to the Holy See Leonida Vera, former Philippine Ambassador to the Vatican Howard Dee, Social Security System chair Thelmo Cunanan and House Speaker Jose de Venecia's wife Gina.

It was not known why the Palace included Vera in its passenger list as she's already in the Vatican.

Bunye said that the government would only shoulder the expenses of those in the official delegation. Each passenger on the PAL flight to Rome paid $1,700. But Gina de Venecia told the INQUIRER that even those considered part of the President's delegation like herself also had to pay. "We have to help shoulder the expense of a chartered flight," she told the INQUIRER yesterday.

With a population of 84 million people, the Philippines is the largest Catholic nation in Asia with an estimated 68 million believers.

"As of now, there is a fixed number of persons on the President's list," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said, who was reading from a list that he failed to show to media.

There have been estimates that

GMA/ A8

IN MEMORIAM: The proudly Filipino-made "popemobile" by Francisco Motors, which John Paul II used in his visit here in 1995, is now on display inside Quiapo Church. *(Story on Page A4.)* ERIK ARAZAS

₱303-M plunder case filed vs General Garcia

By Nelson F. Flores

RETIRED Armed Forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, his wife and their children have been slapped a P303-million plunder case for illegal accumulation of wealth.

The Office of the Ombudsman lodged the case at the Sandiganbayan yesterday, or more than six months after it embarked on an investigation into the matter. No bail was recommended for all the accused.

Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo said investigation had shown that Garcia, in connivance with his wife Clarita and their sons Ian Carl, Juan Paulo and Timothy Mark, "willfully, unlawfully and criminally amass[ed], accumulate[d] and acquire[d] ill-gotten wealth in the form of funds, landholdings and other real and personal properties in the aggregate amount of P303,272,005.99."

Marcelo said Garcia committed the crime in conspiracy with his family and other yet unidentified persons "through a series and/or combination of overt or criminal acts or similar schemes or means, by receiving commissions, gifts, shares, percentages,

P303-M PLUNDER/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol Region and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers while Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY: CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/04/07/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FrontPage

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North, South Koreans 'reunite' at IPU

By TJ Burgonio

THE HEAD of North Korea's parliament yesterday assured Senate President Franklin Drilon that his country remained committed to a reunification with South Korea even though the United States was opposed to it.

Choe Thae Bok, chair of North Korea's Supreme People's Assembly, made the assurance during a courtesy call on Drilon and after meeting by chance and exchanging pleasantries with the South Korean delegation of parliamentarians late yesterday afternoon.

"We are maintaining the principle of reunifying the country in a peaceful way by implementing thoroughly our joint declaration which had been signed and approved by the two countries," Choe told Drilon, through an interpreter.

Strained relations between the two countries improved in 1991 when their two leaders signed an agreement which acknowledged that reunification was the goal of both governments.

Choe, head of a six-man delegation to the ongoing Inter-Parliamentary Union conference, however, said that Washington was opposed to a reunification, noting that this would force it to pull out its troops in Seoul.

"The US doesn't want Korea to be reunified. If that happens, the US would withdraw its troops from South Korea," he said.

Drilon, for his part, said that the Philippine government would support all peaceful initiatives in achieving stability in the region.

"We believe that very good relations with neighbors will go a long way in providing stability between neighbors and in the region as well," he told Choe at his office at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

Shortly before Choe's call, a delegation headed by Yoo Jay Kun, member of South Korea's National Assembly, called on the Senate President.

While walking out of Drilon's office, Yoo broke into a smile when he saw his counterparts from North Korea waiting for their turn at the ante-room. Forgetting political differences back home, delegates from both countries pressed flesh, exchanged pleasantries and even posed for a picture.

Drilon said he believed that the brief meeting would warm relations between the two countries, noting that "North Korea is eager about their reunification."

Differing positions on the process of unification and North Korea's nuclear weapons program, among other issues, have contributed to the "warming and cooling" of relations between the two countries, according to reports.

CHAIRPERSON

WOMEN OF IPU. Sen. Pia Cayetano listens to Alexandra Arriaga of Amnesty International as the Filipino legislator presides over the panel discussion on violence against women and children. Others in photo are (from left) Immaculee Kaymba of Rwanda, Tissa Karaliyada of Sri Lanka and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia.

PHOTOS BY MITCH MAURICIO

ONE WITH WOMEN. Sen. Rodolfo Biazon listens intently along with the women delegates.

HO HUM. A legislator from Ireland dozes off during a discussion on democracy and human rights.

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Police work fast, nab mugger of IPU delegate

By Luige A. del Puerto

IF ONLY the police could always work this fast.

Within 24 hours of the incident, the police had arrested the tricycle driver who allegedly robbed a Belgian delegate to the International Parliamentary Union on Tuesday morning.

Georges Brion, the secretary general of the Belgian Parliament, was mugged early Tuesday after he left the Westin Plaza hotel.

Razon identified the suspect as Victorio Mallari, 24, of Laurel Street, Barangay 96, Pasay City.

Mallari broke down during interrogation and admitted to having robbed the foreigner, said Deputy Director Avelino Razon, head of the National Capital Region Police Office.

The Belgian positively identified Mallari, who was arrested early yesterday, as the driver who robbed him, said Razon.

Brion left the hotel at about 5:45 a.m. Tuesday and asked a tricycle driver to take him to the San Rafael Church in Pasay City. Instead, the driver and three other men took him to Figueroa Street and robbed him.

Brion lost his identification cards, credit cards, P4,000 and $60 to the robbers.

He sustained bruises in the head and had to go to hospital. But hours after the robbery, he was already back at work, said Geert Versnick, the head of the Belgian delegation.

Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, who is in charge of security for the international meeting, said the pressure on the police was really great.

He said "minor incidents" took place despite the fielding of some 13,000 policemen for the IPU conference.

"We are calling on the president of the IPU to express, to tell them that despite our best efforts, (this happened and) we are sorry for this incident," he said.

Also yesterday, the police appealed to whoever took the passport of Brazilian delegate Claudio Cajado Sampaio to return it. Sampaio had lost his passport but could not remember how or when.

The police also disclosed that Joyce Ligale, the wife of the head of the Kenyan delegation, complained that she was shortchanged by P13,000 by the BK Money Changer in Ermita on March 30. The police intervened and Ligale recovered her money.

SUSPECTED mugger taken into custody after his confession.

JOAN BONDOC

Razon said the police had padlocked the money changer's stall.

Philippine National Police chief Director General Arturo Lomibao reiterated his appeal to IPU delegates to inform the security desk where they are going, whenever they choose to leave without a police escort.

The Belgian had apparently left the hotel without informing the police security desk at the hotel but Velasco hastened to add that the police was not passing the buck and was taking responsibility for what happened.

"Anything that happens here is the responsibility of the police, whether he informed us that he was leaving or not," he said.

Mallari, a drug user, is wanted for a string of robbery cases. It was members of the Pasay City's anti-drug unit which arrested him at around midnight on Tuesday in his home.

An asset of the unit overheard Mallari talking about how he and "Jess," a supposed member of the Sputnik Gang, had robbed the Belgian.

"I had just dropped a passenger when my friend urged me to rob foreigners. I was tempted," he said in Filipino.

The two were apparently encouraged by the fact that the Belgian was alone and there were no cops around. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*

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GOING TO MARKET
President Macapagal-Arroyo makes a surprise visit to a local fish market in Surigao City to check on the prices. With her are Surigao City Mayor Alfonso Cassura, Gov. Lyndon Barbers, former Sen. James Barbers and Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap. She urged Yap to find a market for the catch of local fishermen and expressed satisfaction at the prices in the market.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

‘Popemobile’ draws devotees to Quiapo

By Tina G. Santos

ORDINARY Filipinos who can't afford a plane ticket to Rome to attend the burial ceremonies for Pope John Paul II have to make do with the "Popemobile" to keep the memory of the Pontiff alive.

People from all walks of life are now flocking to the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene in the Parish of Saint John the Baptist, more popularly known as Quiapo Church, where the "Popemobile" is now parked.

(The church was erected as a Minor Basilica on Feb. 1, 1988 by Pope John Paul II).

The custom-built, bullet-proof "Popemobile" van, which Pope John Paul II used during his visit in the Philippines in 1995, has become an instant "pilgrimage site" for devotees.

It arrived Tuesday afternoon and will stay at the parish until Friday, the day when the leader of the Roman Catholic Church is buried.

Feeling his presence

Parish officials borrowed the Popemobile from Francisco Motors, the firm that built the vehicle, to make parishioners "feel the presence of the Pope," according to Chris Cuyos, the church's operations officer.

But the white van, which sports the official seal of the Vatican, has been cordoned off to prevent churchgoers from touching it. However, two security men assist devotees in placing flowers and candles near the van.

Some parishioners even had their rosaries and scapulars "blessed" by rubbing them on the Popemobile.

The vehicle's maroon cushioned chair was covered with a black cloth and adorned with the Pope's portrait. Wreaths bearing the messages "We love you, Pope" were also placed on its sides.

"This is my way of paying my last respects to Pope. He was a father to us all," said Greg Puyod, 56, an engineer who came all the way from Laguna, adding that seeing the Pope even from afar during the latter's visit in 1995 made a great impact on his life.

Closer to God

"I felt closer to God after that event. I couldn't explain it but I felt something different. I don't know what it was but I believe it's something special," he added.

"I consider this van a material link to the Pope. I can very much feel his presence just by being near it," said Luzviminda Latian, 35, a housewife from Sampaloc, Manila.

Adoring crowds caught a rare glimpse of the Pope through a four-inch-thick glass bubble atop the Popemobile, which was designed to withstand grenade blasts and machine gun fire, during his visit to Manila for the World Youth Day in January 1995.

The locally assembled vehicle features an armored and air-conditioned glass canopy, puncture-proof tires and a 2,500 cc. Mazda truck engine.

Cuyos said the vehicle exceeded the specifications of the Vatican security.

The Vatican required only that the armor and glass should withstand shots from handguns, but the local Popemobile has been tested with Armalite fire, he said. *With PDI Research*

TOO MANY CONSULTANTS

Palace orders probe of GSIS chief

MALACAÑANG has ordered the Department of Finance to investigate Government Service and Insurance System (GSIS) general manager Winston Garcia for allegedly hiring an inordinate number of consultants.

This was revealed yesterday by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermina who urged Garcia to wisen up and not get into more trouble.

"The Department of Finance is looking into that report regarding the GSIS hiring so many consultants," said Ermina in a briefing in Malacañang.

Ermita said that while government entities were allowed under Republic Act No. 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act to hire consultants, this should depend on the specific needs of the agencies and their capability to pay these specialists from business and academe.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered the implementation of austerity measures not only in government agencies but also in government owned and controlled corporation's where she wanted the pay and perks of top officials slashed, overhead expenses cut, and number of consultants reduced.

But Ermita appears to be exasperated with the controversies that has hounded Garcia since he took over the top post at the state pension fund four years ago. "These (issues) have become noticeable because he himself has become controversial," Ermita said. "I think a fellow like Garcia would be wise enough not to take certain moves that would put him into trouble."

Correction

IN THE article "Teaching kids about birds and bees..." which was published in the March 28 issue, a Fr. Fred Duran was referred to as "a married priest who is now information officer of Tanjay City." The priest referred to should have been Fr. Francis Duran. Fr. Fred Duran, a cousin of Francis, is an active priest and the parish priest of the town of Dauin, Negros Oriental.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Vidal lauds media for papal coverage

CEBU Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal praised both local and international media for their beautiful coverage of the life and times of the late Pope John Paul II.

The grateful cardinal, who left for the Vatican Tuesday night, said for that, the media would be included in his prayers.

"I admire very much how the media has given beautiful attention to the Holy Father's suffering, when he was dying, and now at his death," the 74-year-old prelate said.

Vidal is the only Filipino among the 117 members of the College of Cardinals that will form the conclave, which would choose the successor to the hugely popular John Paul II.

Vidal admitted that he was surprised with the kind of media coverage that the late Pontiff has been getting.

"Usually media is more secular. But just because (there have been) so many days devoted to it (the Pope's death), I really admire the media. So I pray for you," a smiling Vidal told reporters.

Vidal surmised that the late Pope won the hearts of journalists the world over because "he has done so much." "Look how he attracted all the world leaders," he added. *Nikko Dizon*

Magsaysay Institute of Shipping holds groundbreaking ceremony for new dormitory

Responding to the demands of international shipping for highly qualified seafarers, the Magsaysay Institute of Shipping (MIS), located at Dasmariñas, Cavite, is expanding its facilities to meet the training requirements of its partners and various stakeholders. On April 7, MIS celebrates a new milestone: the groundbreaking of its new four-storey dormitory.

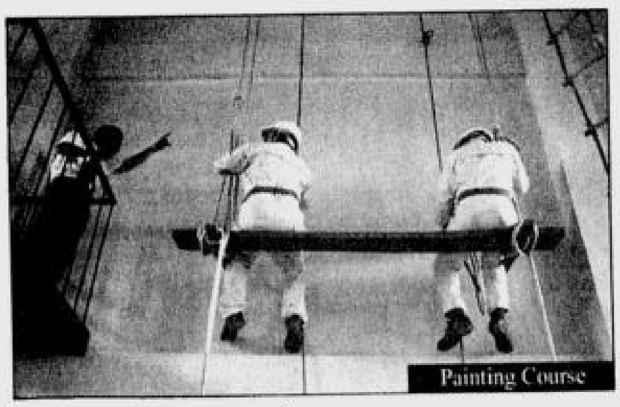
The new dormitory will accommodate the increase in the number of cadets taking the live-in Officer Candidate Course, from the current 240 per year up to 440 from 2006 onwards. The existing dormitory will be converted into more classrooms and laboratory/workshop facilities for maritime, hospitality and culinary arts training.

As Ms. Doris Magsaysay Ho, president of the Magsaysay Group, says: "Today, more than ever, we are faced with the challenges of the shipping industry, both in human resource and compliance to international regulations. We need officers and crew who, apart from having the confidence to man sophisticated vessels and equipment, also take to heart their role in protecting the environment. We must therefore develop programs to ensure excellent officers who are also gentlemen and whole persons in their own right."

The MIS was established in 1993 by three leading shipping companies: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL), Fairmont Shipping (HK), Ltd. and Magsaysay Maritime Corporation. By strengthening the Institute's facilities and course programs, the MIS continues to develop the Filipino seafarer with emphasis on work ethics, job competence and leadership skills adapted to the running of sophisticated ships.

Artist's perspective of new MIS Dormitory

MIS Main Building



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UNHAPPY WHISTLE-BLOWER

With ₱5.8M, Rosebud says snitching does not pay

By Armand N. Nocum

THE PHILIPPINE National Police paid agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong P5.8 million for intelligence services soon after she launched a media attack on First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo in January, Ong disclosed yesterday.

Despite the apparent settlement of what she claimed was owed her, Ong complained that "it does not pay to be a whistle-blower in this country."

In an interview, Ong said that of the P5.8 million paid to her, P4 million was covered by a so-called "service agreement" while the P1.8 million represented interest for the past seven years.

"The PNP released P5.8 million in cash two weeks after I accused (Arroyo) of trying to block the release of the money to me," said Ong, who was interviewed at the justice department while attending a preliminary investigation into the kidnapping case she filed against former National Bureau of Investigation agent Martin Soriano.

She said the money paid to her presumably came from the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (Paoctf).

Ong said the P4 million represented her fee for the work that she did in the Cyclops and Athena police operations in 1998 and 1999.

The intention was to break into the drug and kidnapping syndicates involving several Taiwanese nationals and local police officials allegedly led by the former national police chief, now senator Panfilo Lacson, and other Paoctf officials.

The two police operations resulted in the filing of kidnap-for-ransom charges against Lacson, Colonels Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao; and several others before the Office of the Ombudsman.

Last January, Ong accused Mike Arroyo of allegedly blocking the release of her "agent's fees" to keep her as a "reserve force" against Lacson.

Ong said the money was not the issue but the alleged pressure and harassment that Arroyo put her through to keep her on the leash.

Asked whether she would still do sleuthing work for the government, she replied: "My advice to anyone is this: Think twice before you do whistle-blowing because this government does not know how to honor the sacrifices of whistle-blowers."

The INQUIRER's phone and text messages to Mike Arroyo went unanswered.

But in an earlier interview, Arroyo denied Ong's accusations and said he even gave her money from his own "private funds" to help her.

He admitted having given Ong P500,000 through Susan "Ching" Vargas, the deputy executive secretary for finance and administration.

"I feel so frustrated. What is the world coming to? You help a person in need and she turns around and accuses you of so many things," he said.

Arroyo said Ong was a "charity case," one who survives on dole-outs.

"She's biting the hand that's feeding her. She's so ungrateful," he said.

Apart from giving her P500,000 in "financial assistance" to help her save a piece of property that was about to be foreclosed last year, he also gave P21,000 for the medical needs of Ong's mother in 2003; P107,000 for the physician's professional fee for Ong's father Buan Ong; and P200,000 for Ong's foundation, which goes under the acronym "WAP."

4 fishermen without fuel, food adrift off Subic

By Leila B. Salaverria

THEY'RE within radio range, but they're out of sight. They're in touch, but they don't know where they are.

What the Coast Guard knows is that a fishing banca with four fishermen on board are drifting at sea without fuel, food and water and could be in international waters.

Thus, the Coast Guard has alerted three countries and all mariners in the area for the fishing banca which has been lost at sea for 11 days.

The PCG alerted Taiwan, Vietnam, China and Hong Kong on Tuesday about the F/B Maria Emelyn, which ran out of gas and has been drifting at sea. It left Subic in Zambales on March 22 to fish near the Scarborough Shoals and was expected to return on March 26, according to Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo.

He said the agency has also sent out a maritime alert to all sea vessels to extend assistance to the fishing banca if they spot it.

"One of the possibilities we are looking into is that they are out of our territorial waters," he said yesterday.

Balilo also said authorities are in touch with the fishing banca through radio, but they could not be found because the fishermen themselves don't know where they are.

"The fishermen cannot give their exact location. They said over radio that they are surrounded by water and cannot see land anymore," he said.

As of yesterday, the PCG was still in radio contact with the fishermen, he added.

He said the PCG had also considered the possibility that the fishermen could have drifted near Lubang Island in Mindoro but has so far failed to find them there. Balilo said the Navy has also sent out teams to help locate the missing banca, scouring the waters north of Subic. The Navy has also begun searching areas to the south, he said.

Balilo said PCG commandant Vice-Admiral Arthur Gosingan has ordered all available resources, including rescue vessels and helicopters, to keep on looking for the lost fishermen who said they had become very weak.

"We are racing against time because, according to our last communication with the fishing boat's captain, they have nothing to eat and his companions are very weak. They already drank the water from their radiator and ate the bamboo in the banca," he said.

The PCG identified the four fishermen as Pedro Isidro, 23; Ronald Mercado, 25; Jimmy Francis, 27; and Zaldy Papatani, 49. Isidro was the one acting as captain and the one communicating with officials over the radio.

The F/B Maria Emelyn left Subic on March 22 along with three other vessels. When the F/B Maria Emelyn failed to return on March 26, the Coast Guard station in Subic was immediately alerted and a search was launched

The PCG headquarters in Manila was advised of the situation on March 29 and a wider search was launched.

Body of Pinay slain in Dubai arrives

By Nikko Dizon

THE REMAINS of a Filipina slain in Dubai allegedly by her boyfriend arrived late Tuesday night at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

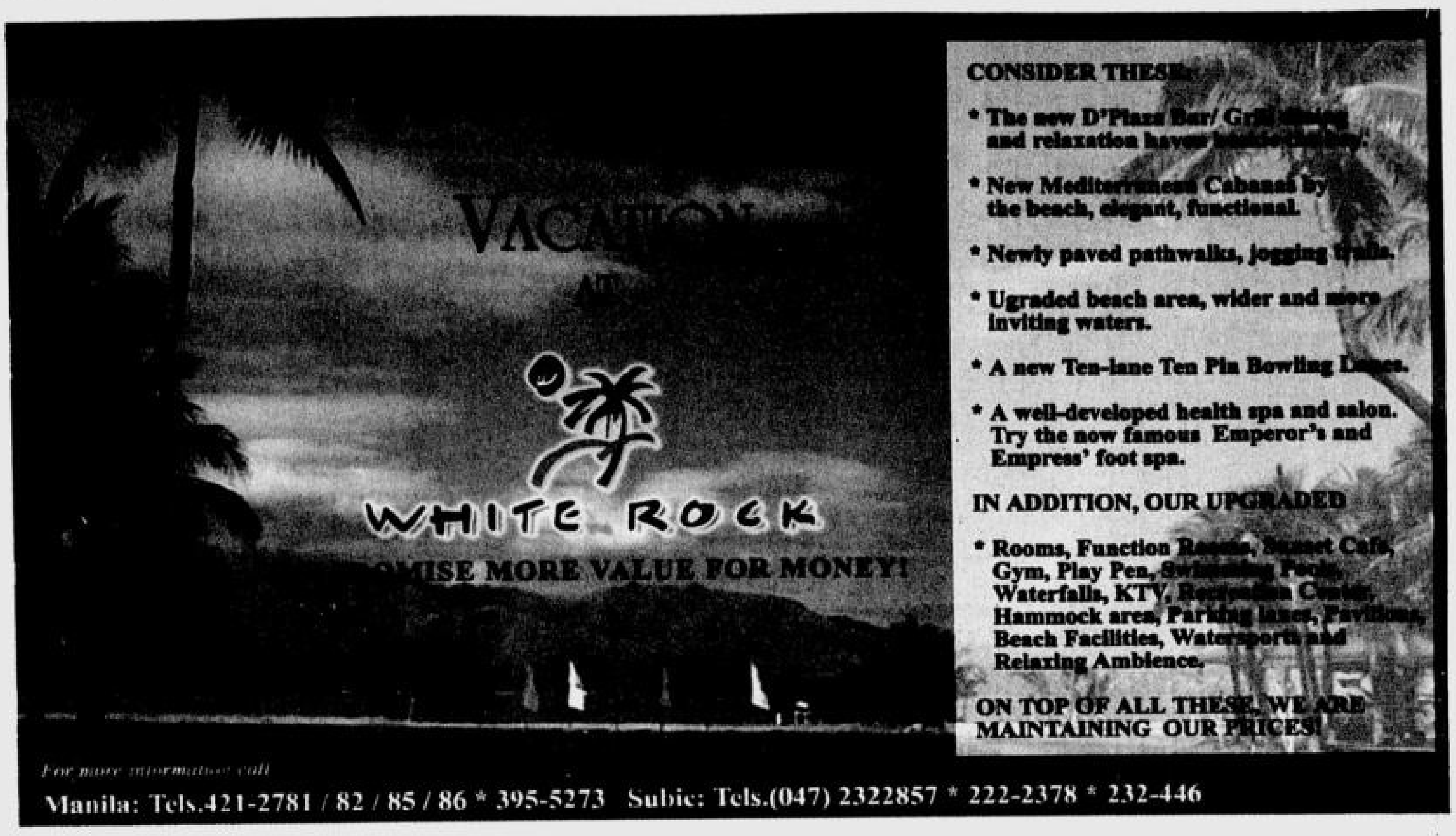
According to reports, Richelle Solis was stabbed to death by her Syrian boyfriend.

Solis' family, who learned of her fate last March 29, described the boyfriend as jealous and possessive, the report added.

A political science graduate, Solis left for Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) more than a year ago and worked at a hotel.

According to her family, Solis wanted to earn enough money to put her through law school.

Her boyfriend, reportedly Solis' co-worker at the hotel, has been arrested.



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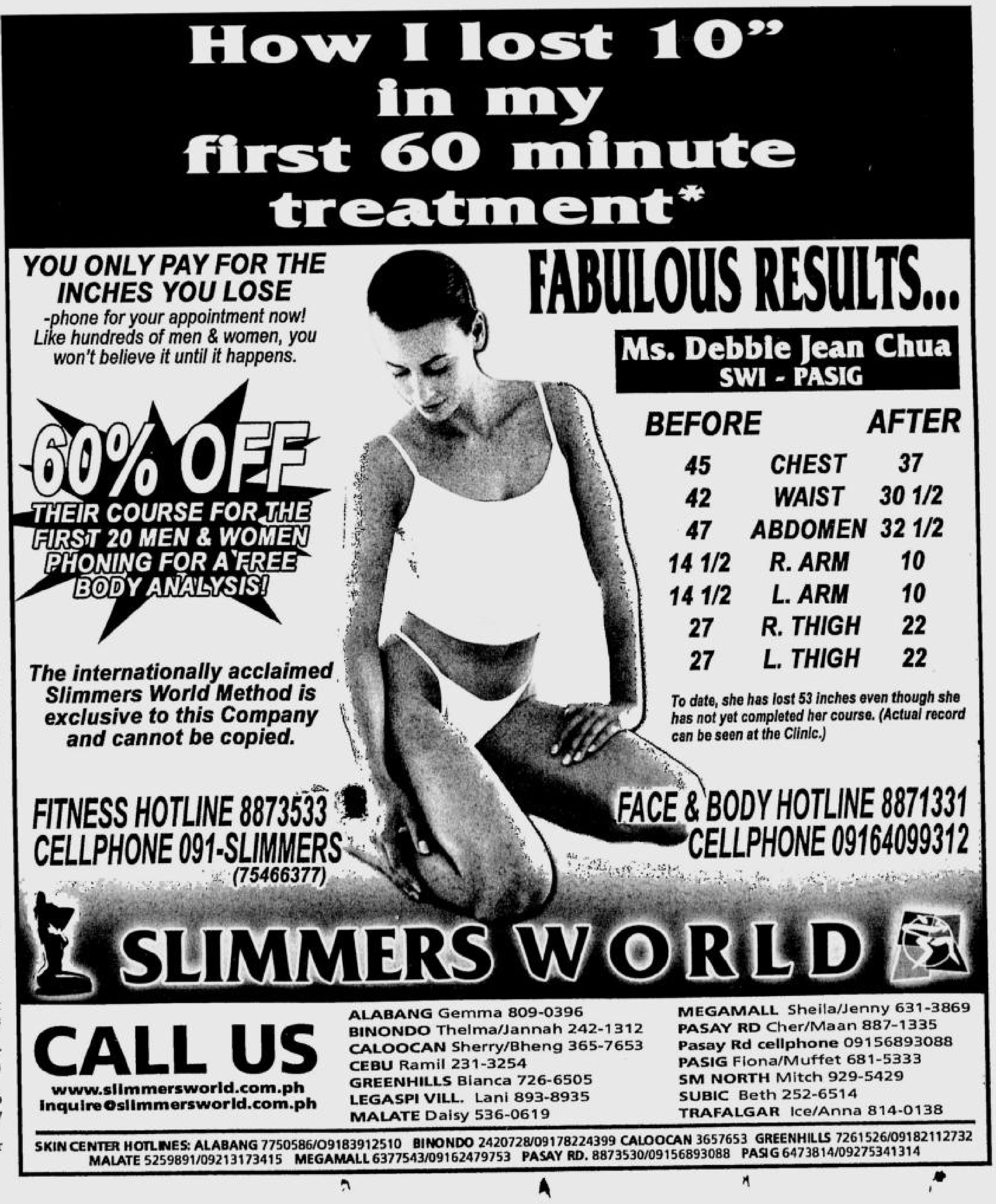
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Mystery cardinal's name not in Pope's last will

From page A1

to the spokesperson, sometimes only a few lines, at times half a page. The first part was written in 1979, the year after the start of his papacy.

The cardinals are being put up in a residence worthy of a top hotel, including—in a welcome novelty—individual bathrooms.

Just a few hundred meters from the splendor of the Sistine Chapel, the Santa Marta residence has more than 100 suites and a score of single rooms served by attentive staff.

There is no unseemly scramble to nab the best rooms, as they are handed out by lot. The cardinals have the late Pope to thank. It was John Paul II who decided in 1994 to have the place built.

When cardinals convened Monday for the first time since the Pope's death late Saturday, they asked the cardinal camerlengo (chamberlain), the official in temporary charge of the interregnum, to make necessary arrangements "for the suitable lodging of the cardinal electors."

This is all a far cry from the cardinal electors' traditional spartan quarters in the Apostolic Palace itself.

Chamber pot

An AFP correspondent who visited the old rooms in August 1978, following the election of the late Pope's immediate predecessor John Paul I, reported that they were dark and humid, the windows affixed shut with a pewter seal.

An iron bed 70 centimeters across stood in a corner, and on a night table were a pitcher for water and a washbowl.

Underneath the bed was a chamber pot, as the floor had only six toilets for its numerous residents.

A total of 120 cardinal electors were lodged there.

The question of access to bathrooms is not just a matter of living it up. Many of the cardinals, by virtue of their rise through the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy, are old and have health problems.

In the past, getting up in the middle of the night to walk along a gloomy corridor, only to find the toilet occupied, was a real test, their colleagues lucky enough to be roomed near the restrooms recounted later.

Karol Wojtyla, the future John Paul II, although then fit and relatively young in his late 50s, would have remembered the hardships when he and his colleagues were summoned twice to the Vatican in 1978, first to elect a successor to Pope Paul VI, and then when John Paul I died after only a month in office.

Antique furniture

The Santa Marta residence, which bears a bronze bust of John Paul II in its well-lit entrance hall, is a revolution from those days.

The floor is marbled and the rooms are decorated with antique furniture.

The 107 apartment-like suites and the 23 individual rooms are equipped with their own bathrooms, and the bigger ones have a little office space, too.

Every room also has a television, although they will be taken away for the duration of the conclave.

Date of conclave

Strict Vatican rules on secrecy—the cardinals are supposed to be guided by the Holy Spirit alone—mean radios, telephones and other forms of communications with the outside world are all banned.

The only cardinals who will not be put at the residence are those based at the Vatican already as part of the curia, the administration of the Holy See. They have their own apartments in the premises.

Cardinals have not decided when to begin the conclave that will choose the next pontiff, according to Vatican spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls.

A senior Vatican official said that for the first time, cardinals will not be totally isolated during their closed-door deliberations, which must begin between April 17 and 22.

The conclave must occur between 15 and 20 days after the Pontiff's death, according to Church law. Pope John Paul II died on April 2.

Piero Marini, the bishop responsible for liturgical ceremonies, said the cardinals would be able to move around in the Vatican but would remain banned from any contact with the outside world.

Major change

In a major change to a centuries-old practice, the Vatican plans to ring bells in addition to sending up white smoke to announce that a new pope has been chosen, Marini said.

Black smoke coming from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel signals no decision has been made after a papal ballot, while white smoke means a pope has been elected.

Working the crowd

In the past, it has sometimes been hard to tell whether the smoke from the Vatican chimney was white or black. "This time we plan to ring the bells to make the election of the pope clearer," Marini said.

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Outside St. Peter's Basilica on Tuesday, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, archbishop of Genoa and a papal contender, was working the crowd, greeting some of the hundreds of thousands lined up to pay their final respects to Pope John Paul II.

"It's an extraordinary day," he said, a camera crew taping every word. "Full of memories of our Pope. The Pope did so much for the world."

Bertone, a former high-ranking Vatican official who took up his Genoa post in 2002, shook hands, embraced a backpacker and gave words of encouragement to the faithful as they waited for hours to file past John Paul's body.

Bertone wasn't exactly hustling for votes, since pilgrims don't vote in a conclave. But he was raising his profile—one of the more subtle ways cardinals can influence a papal election since overt campaigning is so frowned upon.

Even before John Paul II died, cardinals were loath to discuss his succession publicly, ducking the question or, if pressed, sticking to generalities about the qualities that would make a good pope—even though they weren't shy about going before TV cameras.

"That is up to heaven, what God is thinking about that, and then up to the cardinals. I have no comment," Belgian Cardinal Godfried Danneels, himself a papal contender, told reporters Tuesday when asked to speculate on the winner of this month's conclave.

Nevertheless, papal politicking is going on, and even the slightest gesture can be loaded with meaning.

Papabili

It seemed significant, for example, that some of the top "papabili," or cardinals considered to have the qualities of being a pope, attended a recent meeting in New York on improving relations with Jews.

John Paul made reaching out to other religions a hallmark of his papacy. With tensions between faiths on the rise worldwide, a cardinal who has been active in interfaith relations might be viewed positively behind the secret doors of the Sistine Chapel.

So there were Danneels, Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes, and Cardinal Angelo Scola of Venice—all considered papabili—telling a conference of Jewish leaders that the Vatican's unprecedented outreach to Jews would continue.

With them were Cardinal Walter Kasper, who leads the Vatican's office for relations with Jews, and French Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, a confidant of John Paul's and a Jewish convert—both of whom are also on some papabili lists.

Plugging other candidates—in broad regional terms—is also a way cardinals can subtly make their thoughts known.

Italian Cardinal Fiorenzo Angelini told Corriere della Sera newspaper that the papacy might not return to Italy—and that the Latin Americans might snatch it away.

"If one looks at the hard numerical facts, those of the baptized and those of the cardinals, one is struck by the importance achieved by Latin America," he was quoted as saying.

Black pope?

Cardinal Anthony Okogie of Nigeria suggested that the conclave might elect an African pope.

"It's not impossible. Nothing is impossible for God," Okogie said before he left for Rome. "Before Pope John Paul nobody believed that a non-Italian could be pope." Although Okogie is not in the running, Nigeria's premier cardinal, Francis Arinze, has been talked of as a candidate.

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal said he wished that the conclave would choose a new pope who would follow the example of John Paul II.

Vidal is the only Filipino among the 117 members of the College of Cardinals that will form the conclave, which would soon choose the successor to the hugely popular John Paul II.

He said he was preparing himself "spiritually" for the enormous task through fervent prayers and by studying the document provided by the Vatican on how to choose a pope. *Reports from AFP, AP and Nikko Dizon*

Palace confirms military keeping eye on media groups

From page A1

members of the two groups were being specifically monitored.

"Being monitored is not too appropriate a term," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said at a briefing. "This is just made in the course of duty and part of the uniformed services. There are a few whose activities have been known in the course of gathering information, but I wouldn't say there is real monitoring."

Targets to be influenced

Ermita could not say exactly what military agents were conducting with regard to the two media groups. "I would not say they are really being monitored, *inaantabayanan lang*," he said.

The executive secretary was responding to reporters' question regarding "Knowing the Enemy," a briefing material that was prepared by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces and that purportedly lists some two dozen organizations such as the NUJP, PCIJ and even the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines as "enemies of the state."

Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado, chief of the AFP Civil Relations Service, confirmed the existence of the document contained in a compact disc, but said it was only intended to tag groups that communist rebels were supposedly planning to influence.

Ermita said that from his discussion with Gen. Efren Abu, AFP chief of staff, the document merely alluded to some members of the NUJP and PCIJ who were "involved in activities that might be considered inimical to national security."

Just a reminder

"But we are not saying the entire membership of the NUJP or PCIJ is involved," he said.

Ermita said that contrary to the NUJP's statements, the document was not meant to suppress freedom of expression. He said it was just a "reminder" that there could be some journalists who were in contact with members of the Left.

"It is not meant in the sense that just because there could be such members out there, these groups should be castigated or closed," Ermita said.

As it was, Ermita was more concerned about how the CD got leaked than its controversial content.

"If [the CD] is for instructional purposes only," he said, "how it got out is something that, as a former military man, I should call the attention of higher-ups to."

'Grand design'

According to a military intelligence officer, the document asserts that the AFP has unmasked the "grand design" of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, to "exploit the weaknesses of the democratic system."

"The military believes the CPP-NPA has infiltrated and continues to infiltrate existing sectoral organizations. This is part of the grand design of the CPP-NPA," said the officer who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Rather than brand these organizations as enemies of the state, "the intention of the presentation is to warn [them]," the officer insisted.

The officer said the document was actually titled "Knowing the Enemy: Are we missing the point?" because it was directed at assessing the military strategy against the 36-year communist insurgency.

"We've been doing it wrong," the officer said, adding that the focus of the anti-insurgency campaign should not be against the NPA "but the CPP-NPA personalities who direct the armed and legal campaign."

Old hat

But Pamalakaya, one of the groups listed in the document, said the communist infiltration theory was old hat.

Pamalakaya information officer Gerry Corpuz said similar accusations against militant groups were made at the height of the anti-insurgency campaign during the Marcos regime.

"That's not new. They're reviving it because there's a campaign to demonize groups critical of the government and make them appear as terrorists," Corpuz said.

He said the military was trying to "justify the systematic killing of leaders and members of progressive groups."

The military intelligence officer said "Knowing the Enemy" was the product of six years of study and information-gathering from captured CPP-NPA members and documents seized from them.

Briefings to military personnel and selected civilian groups started a year ago, the officer said.

Arrogance, ignorance

The NUJP assailed the military for alleged arrogance and ignorance.

Its chair, Inday Espina Varona, said the military needed only to check with the police to know that it was actually coordinating with authorities to go after criminals, especially those involved in violence against the media.

She said an officer of the AFP Civil Relations Service had taken her to task for NUJP's reportage of rebel gains while ignoring the military's successes against the insurgency.

"Don't they know that the NUJP is not a news organization? Its only mandate is to look after the welfare [of practicing journalists]," she said in an interview.

Varona said it was not true that the document was only for military purposes.

"Arrogance and ignorance are dangerous, especially in persons who claim to know who the enemies of the people are," she said.

In a statement, the NUJP asked President Macapagal-Arroyo and General Abu to say whether "Knowing the Enemy" represented official government policy.

"If so, why is the NUJP tagged as an 'enemy' when it has been working closely with law enforcement agencies to solve the murder of journalists in the country?" it said.

"If it is not official policy, then we demand that the President and the AFP chief of staff give a categorical statement, investigate the authors of the briefing kit, order a stop to the smear campaign, and educate them on the basic concepts of democracy," it added.

Witch hunting

"Knowing Your Enemy" is intended to "silence" and "neutralize" perceived enemies of the state, according to Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela.

In a joint statement, the party-list groups said the military showed "ignorance, insensitivity and callousness" when it included the CBCP in the list.

"Like a fish caught by its mouth, the AFP's call to 'neutralize' the CPP echelon of alliances [exposes] the policy of witch hunting and violent repression of legal democratic forces and personages. In military parlance, the term 'neutralize' includes assassination," they said.

Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano said the "list" confirmed "a grand plot to demonize groups critical of the anti-people policies of the Arroyo administration in a desperate attempt to silence the people's increasing discontent."

Audit AFP funds

His colleague in Anakpawis, Rep. Crispin Beltran, called for an audit of the funds of the AFP and National Security Agency.

"It's becoming apparent that the national government and its security and defense agencies are utilizing millions of pesos in public funds for a vilification (and liquidation) campaign against legitimate critics," Beltran said. With reports from Norman Bordadora and Michael Lim Ubac

₱303-M plunder case filed vs General Garcia

From page A1

kickbacks or other forms of pecuniary benefits like shopping money or gratitude money."

Garcia is also facing a forfeiture case before the anti-graft court.

His unexplained wealth first came to light last year when US authorities detained two of his sons at the San Francisco International Airport for attempting to smuggle in thousands of dollars. Their mother later wrote US authorities that the funds comprised "gratitude money" given her husband by contractors.

Garcia is being held in the compound of the Intelligence Service of the AFP in Camp Aguinaldo. He is under court-martial for violations of Articles of War.

Military prosecutors rested their case against him on Monday, after presenting their 14th and last witness, Kevin Peters, an official of the US Department of Homeland Security.

Plunder elements present

According to Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, all the elements of plunder as listed in Republic Act No. 7080 are present in the case against the Garcias.

GARCIA

The plunder law punishes public officers who have amassed ill-gotten wealth of at least P50 million through misappropriation, conversion, misuse or malversation of public funds or raids on the public treasury.

The law also penalizes public officers who have directly or indirectly received commissions, kickbacks, etc. from any person or entity in connection with a government contract or project or by reason of their office or position.

To explain why the amount being sought by the government had risen from P285 million to P303 million, Villa-Ignacio said more of the Garcias' ill-gotten wealth was discovered during the investigation.

He said it had also been shown that by the year 2003, Garcia only had a net worth of more than P3.2 million that could be lawfully sustained by his income.

"Beyond this amount, therefore, his funds, properties and assets could only be ill-gotten," the prosecutor said.

Contracts for hardware

Villa-Ignacio said the investigation had shown that the Garcias amassed cash and real and personal property despite the clear absence of adequate financial capacity.

He said Clarita Garcia had admitted in a sworn statement that the funds used to acquire their property came from "businesses that are awarded contracts for military hardware."

"As comptroller, my husband handles all budgets for the [AFP]," she said. "My husband prepared the budget of the [AFP] based on the requests of each branch of the military. The budget is then sent to the Secretary of National Defense, and it is sent to the Senate for approval. The Armed Force Committee reviews each contractor's bid. Once the bids are approved and the review committee has checked out companies, my husband is the final signatory for funding the contracts. The expense money, gratitude money and shopping money is not declared as income."

Seized property

Earlier, the Sandiganbayan seized two pieces of real estate in Batangas registered in the name of Juan Paolo Garcia.

The seizures were ordered by the court's 4th Division, where the forfeiture case against Garcia had been lodged.

According to the Sandiganbayan sheriff's office, "this levy on attachment shall remain in full force and effect unless lifted by this office pursuant to an order from the court, and upon full satisfaction of the judgment."

The other assets seized by the court include a cannibalized Honda CRV mini-van, a resort and a school for caregivers in Garcia's home province of Iloilo, and two other pieces of real estate in Baguio City.

The assets will remain in the custody of the court, which will determine if these were illegally acquired.

US resident

At the court-martial hearing on Monday, Kevin Peters, an immigration and customs attaché of the US Embassy in Manila, testified that Garcia had been officially granted permanent resident status in the United States.

Prosecutors said Peters' testimony confirmed that Garcia had violated a law barring public officials and employees from obtaining immigrant or permanent resident status abroad.

Other prosecution witnesses testified that Garcia had acquired several luxury vehicles, sizable bank accounts and other assets that he did not declare in his Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth for 2002 and 2003.

A statement issued by the AFP public information office said the military prosecution panel was confident that based on the evidence and the testimony of witnesses, "it has satisfied the requirements to prove beyond reasonable doubt that ... Garcia clearly violated Articles of War 96 (conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman) and 97 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline)."

The prosecution panel will formally submit its evidence on April 22.

After that, Garcia may start presenting his own witnesses and evidence. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

Gov't inaction blamed for killing of journalists

A "CULTURE of violence, encouraged by government inaction" is the main reason for the deaths of 66 journalists in the Philippines since democracy was restored in 1986, according to the findings of an international study released yesterday.

The report by the Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists said that with three journalists killed already this year, 2005 was shaping up to be worse than 2004 when 13 journalists were murdered.

"This report puts the government of the Philippines on notice: the world is watching," said IFJ president Christopher Warren.

"The government of President Arroyo must halt the bloodshed of our colleagues and the citizens of the Philippines," Warren said.

The report, "A Dangerous Profession: Press Freedom Under Fire in the Philippines," is the result of an international fact-finding mission to the Philippines earlier this year.

The mission was prompted by the Philippines gaining the dubious honor of featuring second only to Iraq as the most deadly place for journalists to work, the IFJ said.

The IFJ investigation was conducted jointly with the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines.

Key findings show that of the 66 journalists killed since 1986, only one case has been successfully prosecuted.

"Tolerance of a culture of violence involving senior government officials is responsible for the high death toll," the report said.

It found that poor salaries put many journalists at risk and poor witness protection programs resulting in the deaths of witnesses has contributed to the lack of cases being brought to trial.

The report also said the country's "gun culture" has turned journalists into combatants, noting the widespread practice of journalists arming themselves with guns and body guards to protect themselves.

"It is difficult to determine how widespread this practice is, but its evident inadequacy is indicated by at least one graphic instance of the corpse of a one journalist in police photos taken immediately after the murder," the IFJ said in its report.

"Clearly evident is a handgun stuck in the waistband as the body lies sprawled in a ditch," it said.

The panel said it had encountered journalists who passionately believe that they had the right to carry guns to defend not only against assassins but also against street thugs.

"While it is understandable that journalists who feel threatened going about their daily lives will seek to minimize the dangers, the carrying of arms is not sanctioned by the wider community of journalists," the IFJ said in its report.

It warned that while the Geneva Conventions relating to war provided for the protection of civilians and journalists covering conflicts, they excluded journalists who carried guns or were dressed in military uniform.

It said it was the task of civil authorities in the Philippines to "provide the sort of protections being sought by the journalists."

The IFJ condemned as "irresponsible and counter-productive" the Philippine National Police's plan to relax gun control regulations in the case of Filipino journalists.

"The IFJ and the NUJP maintain that journalists are independent observers and should not be encouraged to be active combatants in an increasingly dangerous domestic environment," the report said.

The report recommended that a safety office be established to develop and deliver training programs on ethics, human rights, self-protection and how to cover hostile regions for journalists in the Philippines.

It also called on the government to expand Task Force Newsmen, a body set up by Ms Arroyo, to include non-governmental organizations and to effectively investigate the cases of journalists killed.

The IFJ has also called on the international community to lobby the Philippine government and judiciary to successfully prosecute the cases.

"By speaking to the families and employers of the slain journalists in the Philippines, as well as to regional officials, we have gained an understanding of the factors that contributed to these tragic deaths," said Gerard Noonan, who headed the IFJ delegation.

A delegation from the Paris-based global press watchdog, Reporters Without Borders, is due to arrive today to look into the deaths of journalists.

The move was prompted by the recent murder of columnist Marlene Esperat who was killed in front of her children in her home in Sultan Kudarat province in Mindanao. *AFP and Norman Bordadora*

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Monaco's Prince Rainier dies at 81

From page A1

palace was already at half-mast because of the death of Pope John Paul II. The mood among the devoutly Catholic population of 32,000 had been somber for several weeks as the two leaders approached the end of their lives.

Shopkeepers in the old town of Monaco below the royal palace placed black ribbons on flags in their window displays. Local people were expecting an announcement from the palace on procedures for mourning and arrangements for the funeral.

Great sorrow

By tradition the funeral takes place between seven and nine days after the sovereign's death.

"It is a time of great sorrow for the principality. But Prince Albert will ensure the continuity of his father's rule. That's what he was brought up for and we know he will do it," said Francis Roque, a pizzeria owner.

Among the foreign tributes, President Jacques Chirac of France said Rainier was "a figure who was universally respected and much loved in the principality ... His courage and tenacity in the face of illness will remain with us as an example."

Succeeding his grandfather Prince Louis II in November 1949, Rainier ascended to power three years before Queen Elizabeth II took the British throne. He was a descendant of the Genoese family of Grimaldi which had ruled the tiny Mediterranean port since 1297.

WHEN THE WORLD was young, no family was more royal and glamorous than the youthful Rainiers of Monaco: Prince Rainier III and Princess Grace holding Princess Stephanie, Prince Albert, the second eldest, and at center is Princess Caroline. AP

In his 55 years in power he is credited with transforming the microstate from a Riviera Ruritania into a thriving center of tourism and banking, using his contacts and business acumen to diversify the economy and attract the interest of the rich and famous.

He also stoutly defended the rights of Monaco as an independent country, fending off attempts in the 1960s by France—with which it is linked by treaty—to curb its tax laws. In 1993 he brought the principality into the United Nations.

Fairytale marriage

But the prince will always be best remembered for his fairytale marriage in 1956 to the American film star Grace Kelly.

It started with a courtship at the Cannes film festival, was celebrated before millions of television viewers in a magnificent ceremony in Monaco cathedral, produced three children, then ended in tragedy when Princess Grace died in a car crash in 1982. He never remarried.

Grace's glamour brought the Grimaldis into the media spotlight, and for much of his reign Rainier was troubled by the gossip surrounding their three children—Caroline, Albert and Stephanie.

Turbulent romances

Caroline's divorce and the death of her second husband; Albert's succession of jet-set consorts but persistent refusal to marry; above all Stephanie's turbulent romantic life: the family's private lives were on constant display in the glossy magazines.

However, Rainier himself retained his dignity, and there were no alarming revelations about his own personal affairs.

Born on May 31, 1923, the son of Prince Pierre de Polignac and Princess Charlotte of Monaco, Rainier was educated in Britain, Switzerland and France, studying literature at Montpellier and politics in Paris.

In World War II he served with the French army and in 1945 received the Prix de Guerre for liaison duties under enemy fire.

Rich man's resort

When he took power in 1949 Monaco was a rich man's resort on the Cote d'Azur known for its casino and motor racing, but at risk of descending into lotus-eating idleness and total dependence on France.

Half a century later Monaco is the most densely populated state in the United Nations, construction covers the whole of the territory and even areas reclaimed from the sea, and the country is on a sound economic footing.

France is a dominant presence—by treaty the state's chief minister must be a French citizen and policy is aligned with that of Paris—but in 2000 when French parliamentarians charged Monaco with being a haven for money-laundering, Rainier saw off his accusers.

Rainier will be succeeded as prince by Albert, an accomplished sportsman and confirmed bachelor. In 2002 the state's constitution was changed so that the title can pass through the female line if Albert dies childless. *AFP*

FAST FACT$

Monaco smallest state after Vatican

MONACO—Monaco is a tiny principality which, as Europe's longest-serving monarch, Rainier led into an age of skyscrapers and banking. Here are some facts about it:

- Bordering the Mediterranean Sea on the southern coast of France, near the Italian border, it is the second-smallest independent state in the world after the Vatican. Monaco covers 200 hectares of land.
- Some 30,000 people live in Monaco, some 45 percent of them French, 15 percent Monegasque and 15 percent Italian. French is the official language.
- It is ruled by a hereditary, constitutional monarchy. The prince represents the principality in its foreign relations. Monaco has signed several treaties with France to ensure its independence and sovereignty.
- Prince Rainier III's ancestors were the Genoese Grimaldis, one of whose descendants—Francois Grimaldi "the spiteful"—captured Monaco in 1297.
- When Rainier officially became monarch in 1950, Monaco was best known for the casino on which its prosperity was founded in the 19th century. Rainier led the state into an age of international banking and business. By the 1990s, gambling accounted for less than 5 percent of Monaco's annual income, with the bulk of revenue coming from value-added tax, tourism, commerce and industry. *Reuters*

GMA handpicked her Vatican party for 14-hr flight, says Malacañang

From page A1

as many as 100 would keep the President company in the 14-hour trip to the Vatican. "The others are just support staff and security," Ermita said.

As of press time, Malacañang had not provided the media with a complete passenger list of the chartered PAL flight that would take the President and her party to the Vatican in time for Pope John Paul II's funeral on Friday morning (afternoon in Manila).

In a press release, Malacañang described the Vatican delegation as "small" but it did not specify how many.

Malacañang has also named 17 others on the flight, including Bunye and First Daughter Luli Arroyo, who is part of the unofficial delegation. Also part of the delegation are Government Media Affairs Secretary Cerge Remonde, Philippine Star publisher Max Soliven and his wife Preciosa, and Karen Davila of Channel 2.

Bunye did not respond when asked who would take the seat of Vera, who is already in the Vatican.

Bunye said the members of the President's delegation were "fairly representative" of the public—Mandanas represented the legislature; De Venecia, the women sector, Luli the First Family and the youth, and Cunanan, the government in general.

With half the population earning $2 a day or less, few of the Filipino faithful can afford the trip.

Domestic servants

Aside from the well-heeled elite, the only Filipinos likely to be at the funeral would be some of the 200,000 Filipinos who work in Italy. Many of them are household domestic servants, according to government figures.

Maucie Cuna, vice president for outbound travel with the Philippine Travel Agencies Association, told Agence France Presse there had been no "mad rush" to catch flights to Rome.

"One problem is that we no longer have direct flights to Italy and visas take two to three weeks."

Visa inquiries

A spokesperson for the Italian embassy told AFP there had been no noticeable increase in visa inquiries since the Pope's death at the weekend.

She said the embassy had made no special arrangements for the Arroyo party.

"There has been no rush of bookings," an employee at Manila-based Dominican Travels told AFP.

"What we have are families who have booked European tours before the Pope died," he said.

"There were some inquiries," a PAL spokesperson said. However, she said the carrier was not arranging more special flights to Rome.

The President's foreign trips have been followed closely by the public since her visit to China, which critics have branded as a virtual First Family vacation because her grandchildren and their nannies were part of the delegation.

Ermita said that while the President's only schedule in the Vatican was to attend the burial, she might opt to join a Mass for Filipinos in honor of the Pope.

Veep as caretaker

The President, who is expected to be back in Manila Saturday, has designated Vice President Noli de Castro as caretaker during her stay abroad.

Ermita said the Vice President would mostly attend to administrative matters, including the formal reception for visiting Bahrain Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salmen al-Khalifa who is expected to arrive this afternoon.

Before she left last night, Ms Arroyo might be able to finalize several documents, including the executive order for the national identification system to be carried out by the National Economic and Development Authority, according to Ermita. *Reports from AFP*

GMA's official and unofficial delegation

Official delegation

Hermilando I. Mandanas
Representative, Batangas
Ambassador Leonida L. Vera
Philippine Ambassador to the Holy See
Ambassador Thelmo Cunanan
Georgina P. de Venecia
Ambassador Howard Dee

Accompanying delegation

Evangelina Lourdes M. Arroyo
Daughter of the President
Ambassador Preciosa Soliven
Belinda Cunanan

Members of the clergy

Archbishop Fernando R. Capalla
Archbishop Paciano B. Aniceto
Bishop Antonio J. Ledesma
Bishop Socrates Villegas
Bishop Oscar Solis
Fr. Leonardo Mercado
Sr. Lou Q. Solijon
Sr. Ma. Luz Mijares
Sr. Ma Clarissa Valleque
Teresa Tunay

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills
City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Securities and Exchange Commission, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the REPAIR AND RENOVATION OF SEC CEBU EXTENSION OFFICE at SEC Bldg., V. Rama Ave., English, Guadalupe, Cebu City.

a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorship or
b. Partnership duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the interest belongs to citizen of the Philippines; or
c. Corporation duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizen of the Philippines; or
d. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) and

Bidders/contractors should have a valid and current License and Registration issued by PCAB.

License at least "Category C"
Registration at least "SMALL B"

Bidder should have a similar completed contract within a period of five (5) years and must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget of the contract to be bid.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be bid is FOUR MILLION FORTY SEVEN THOUSAND THIRTY THREE PESOS AND FORTY FIVE CENTAVOS (Php4,047,033.45).

Documents for Application for Eligibility will be available for issuance starting April 8 to 15, 2005 at the General Services Division, 4th Floor, SEC Building, EDSA Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, upon presentation of PCAB license and a payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

Deadline for submission of Letter of Intent and opening of the Eligibility Envelope shall be on April 22, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at the Market Regulation Department (MRD) Conference Room, 6th Floor, SEC Building.

A complete set of bidding documents may be obtained by the eligible bidder starting April 25 to May 2, 2005 at the General Services Division, 4th Floor, SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00). For further details, please contact Asst. Director Romeo O. Dauag at Tel. No. 727-3320.

Pre-Bid conference will be on May 2, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at the Market Regulation Department (MRD) Conference Room, 6th Floor, SEC Building.

Deadline for submission and opening of Technical and Price Proposal will be on May 16, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at the Market Regulation Department (MRD) Conference Room, 6th Floor, SEC Building. Late submission and/or incomplete bid documents will no longer be accepted.

Republic Act 9184, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation, Post Qualification and Awards of Contracts.

The SEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formalities therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposal as evaluated is most advantageous to the Commission.

SEC also assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that any award will be made.

(Sgd.) JOSE AQUINO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–April 7 & 14, 2005)

Russian senator finds RP truly 'Pearl of Orient'

From page A1

Petrenko, who's a delegate to the ongoing Inter-Parliamentary Union conference, will bring with her pearls from the Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan, famous for its jewels, pirated DVDs and second-hand cell phones.

Petrenko said the pearls are gifts for her colleagues and staff. She is head of the social committee of the Russian Federation, which is concerned mostly about children's and women's issues.

"The workmanship is brilliant," she exclaimed in Russian. Valentina Nebogatova, wife of the Russian ambassador, interpreted for her.

Brilliant workmanship

Nebogatova said the Russian lawmaker "bought some souvenirs so that other senators, her colleagues, can share those beautiful pearls and everybody there would be attracted to come here and buy themselves."

Muslim Greenhills

Nebogatova is a frequent visitor to the shoppping center, where she has formed friendship with a Muslim family, a dealer of pearls in Greenhills.

She added that she invited Petrenko to Greenhills to show her Philippine products, and to probably promote Philippine pearls in the Russian market.

Favorite area

During the last two days, IPU delegates have been frequenting the Greenhills shopping center. Policemen said their favorite is the area where pearls are sold.

Pearls in Greenhills, peddled by Muslims, cost anywhere between a few hundred to hundreds of thousands of pesos, and while Petrenko was awed at the elaborate pieces, she said she can't afford to buy them.

"This parliamentarian decided to just try on these beautiful things," Petrenko said. "But beautiful things cost a lot."

"She promises to come again when she has got more money to buy them," said Nebogatova, who has been in the Philippines since October 2002.

Petrenko praised the high level of security provided the IPU delegates.

Security lauded

"I feel very nice here," she added, personally thanking PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao, who checked the security measures in the area on Tuesday.

"Of course I think that the security problem, and the problem of terrorism exists all over the world, we must solve it together," she said.

Both Russia and the Philippines are facing secessionist movements from Muslim armed groups, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Southern Philippines and Chechen rebels in Russia.

Last year, suspected Chechen rebels stormed a school in North Ossetia in Russia, killing around 200 students.

Terrorists, also believed to be Chechen fighters, seized control of a Moscow theater two years ago. Hundreds of civilians died alongside the hostage takers when Russian authorities gassed the theater.

Lomibao makes wish

During their brief chat with Lomibao, the Russian ladies explained that in Russia, if someone stands between two persons with the same name, he or she should make a wish.

Lomibao was standing between the ladies both named Valentina.

And what was the chief PNP's wish? "I wish to visit your country," Lomibao said without thinking twice.

"Invite me," he said.

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
REGION VI, ILOILO CITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
FOR GRAINS HANDLING SERVICES FOR NFA REGION VI

The National Food Authority (NFA), Region VI, Iloilo City invites qualified handling services contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of grain handling services in the different warehouses in Region VI for calendar year 2005.

LOT NO.	PROVINCE	ESTIMATED VOLUME TO BE HANDLED (In bag of 50 kgs)	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)
1	Aklan	102,000	P 404,250.00
2	Antique	117,000	P 486,500.00
3	Capiz	243,000	P 1,186,500.00
4	Iloilo & Guimaras	511,000	P 2,542,750.00
5	Negros Occidental	503,000	P 1,765,750.00

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

Activity	Date	Time
1. Issuance of eligibility requirements and bid forms	April 1-22, 2005	8 AM-5 PM
2. Pre-bid conference	April 29, 2005	9:30 AM
3. Submission and opening of eligibility requirements and bid documents	May 10, 2005	10:00 AM

Interested parties may secure the application forms, eligibility requirements and bid forms from the RBAC Secretariat at NFA Regional Office after payment of a non-refundable / non-transferable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per lot.

For inquiry, please call RBAC Secretariat through telephone number (033) 329-2165 and telefax number (033) 329-6383.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY, TECHNICALITY OR DEFECT FOUND THEREIN AND ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) VILMA H. ZARRAGA, MNSA
RBAC CHAIRMAN
Asst. Regional Director

(PDI–March 31 & April 7, 2005)

NEGROS LAND CASE

Farmers fear landowner's goons

By Blanche S. Rivera

FARMERS who won a landmark case against Negros landowner Roberto Cuenca yesterday reiterated their request for police outposts in the haciendas to ensure their safety after they are installed in their lands.

Task Force Mapalad, the organization of the farmer beneficiaries in Negros, said the death of at least three members who were killed allegedly by the landowner's goons last year have made security a concern for most beneficiaries.

Officials of the Department of Land Reform and TFM held a meeting to draft an action plan for the installation of farmers at the 446-hectare Hacienda Velez-Malaga in La Castellana city on March 31, but no farmer has been installed until now.

"There are no more legal obstacles. The TFM is just not happy that the DLR is not moving fast enough. Everyday is very meaningful, very important to these farmers," TFM legal counsel Christian Monsod told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

"Because of the constant harassment, the TFM wants DLR to act more speedily in installing and protecting the farmers," he said.

Monsod warned that the group would be ready to file complaints against PNP officials who will refuse to comply with instructions to provide security to the farmers.

TFM lawyers were already looking at charges that could be filed against Col. Pedro Merced, the regional commander of the mobile group 6 in Negros whose refusal to put up a police detachment led to the death of 60-year-old farmer Teresa Mameng, who was reportedly attacked by guards of the Hacienda Conchita Villanueva in September last year.

Monsod said he personally gave Merced a copy of the order from the Philippine National Police operations office in Camp Crame but the colonel insisted he did not get the official copy of the order.

"We are going to pursue our case. At the very least, the PNP should relieve him and investigate his non-compliance," Monsod said.

He said the TFM would need police outposts and roving patrols so the farmers can have access to immediate assistance, especially in hot spots.

The DLR is set to install beneficiaries in the haciendas this month.

Tourism short of arrival target for '04

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism yesterday said only 2.29 million foreign tourists came to the country last year, slightly higher than the 1.9 million recorded in 2003 but lower than the target of 2.4 million to 2.5 million for 2004.

However, the 20-percent increase in 2004 still exceeded the country's highest ever 2.22 million foreign tourist arrivals in 1997.

DOT Secretary Joseph Ace Durano set the 2.4 million to 2.5 million target when he took over in September last year.

The department this year embarked with its P300-million "market specific" promotion drives in its top three targets: China, Japan and South Korea. It is also busy promoting the country in the ongoing World Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan.

The good news, according to Durano, was that the Philippine tourism industry generated some $2 billion in tourism revenues last year. The amount represented a 30.7 percent growth from the $1.5 billion income of the industry in the previous year.

"The data show that the tourism industry continues to be a major contributor to the growth of the Philippine economy," he said.

The industry's revenues represented the average daily expenses of foreign tourists to the country last year. According to the DOT's statistics division, each tourist in 2004 spent an average of US$90.76 per day, covering outlay for accommodations, food and beverage, guided tours, entertainment and recreation, local transport, and shopping.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 7, 2005
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 5:27-33
Gospel: John 3:31-36

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "He who comes from above is above all; he who comes from the earth belongs to the earth and his words, too, are earthly. The One who comes from heaven speaks of the things he has seen and heard; he bears witness to this but no one accepts his testimony. Whoever does receive his testimony acknowledges the truthfulness of God.

"The one sent by God speaks God's words and gives the Spirit without measure. For the Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything into his hands. Whoever believes in the Son lives with eternal life, but he who will not believe in the Son will never know life and always faces the justice of God."

Commentary

John weaves together the images of what is above, of the The One who comes from heaven, and what he has seen and heard, and how now that he is upon earth, in the flesh of Jesus, he speaks of what he knows and bears witness, but no one accepts his testimony. No one acknowledges the truthfulness of God who refuses to receive Jesus' words as testimony about God. The mystery of God the Father in Jesus and Jesus in the Father, bound in the Spirit is found in these words: Whoever believes in the Son lives with eternal life, but he who will not believe in the Son will never know life and always faces the justice of God. Do we believe in the Son? Oh, not just in words, or creed or ritual, but in practice, in obedience to the Scriptures, in imitation of Jesus, child of God, maker of peace, reconciler, healer and one who loves, even unto death? Do we lay down our lives for one another, resisting evil without doing harm? Lord, give us life and the courage to live up to our baptismal promises this Easter season.

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- MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL CONTROL
  April 23 - May 14, 2005 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION
  April 18 - 29, 2005 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- SKILLS TRAINING - THE MOST NEGLECTED DUTY OF THE SUPERVISOR
  April 18 - 29, 2005 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- HOW TO DELEGATE WORK AND ENSURE ITS DONE RIGHT
  April 19 - 21, 2005 T-TH 6:00PM - 8:00PM
- EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER RELATIONS AND HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS
  April 16, 2005 Saturday 1:00AM - 5:00 PM
- EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS
  April 16, 2005 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00PM
- EFFECTIVE PEST MANAGEMENT
  April 16, 2005 Saturday 1:00PM - 5:00 PM
- HOW TO DETECT AND PREVENT FRAUDS IN WAREHOUSING
  April 23, 2005 Saturday 1:00PM - 5:00 PM
- TECHNIQUES IN HANDLING DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND DISMISSAL
  April 23, 2005 Saturday 1:00PM - 5:00 PM
- CUSTOMER INTIMACY
  April 23, 2005 Saturday 1:00PM - 5:00 PM

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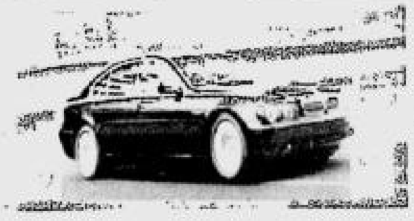

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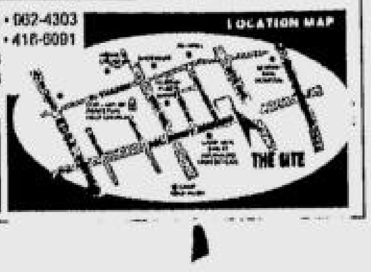

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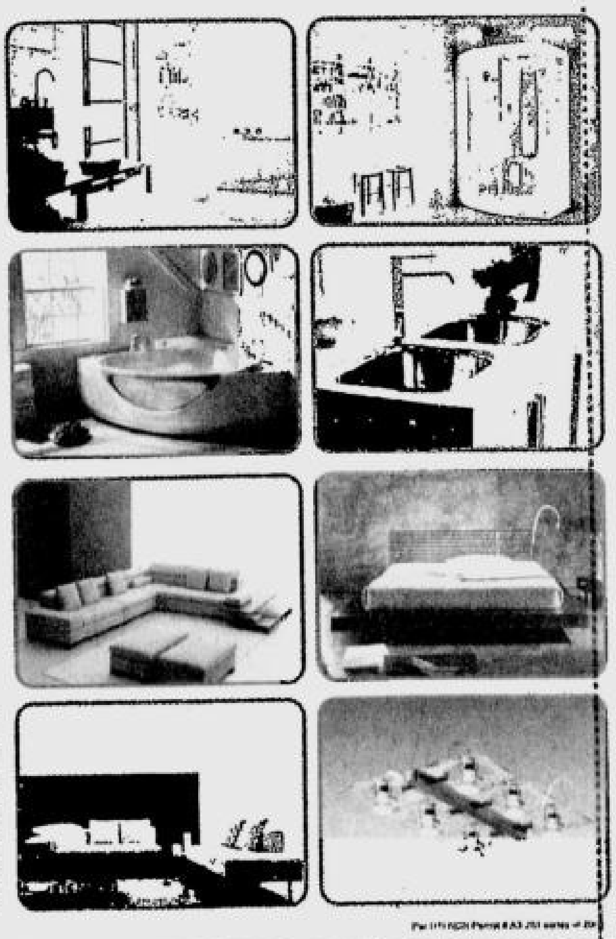

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Saudi forces kill 18 al-Qaida militants in fierce clashes

TALABANI AFP

Kurdish leader is new Iraq president

BAGHDAD—The Iraqi parliament chose Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani as the country's new interim president Wednesday, reaching out to the nation's long-repressed Kurdish minority and bringing the country closer to its first democratically elected government in 50 years.

Ousted members of the country's former regime—including toppled leader Saddam Hussein—were allowed to watch the event on televisions in their prison cells, Iraqi officials said.

Shiite Adel Abdul-Mahdi and interim President Ghazi al-Yawer, a Sunni Arab, were also chosen as Talabani's two vice presidents. After weeks of negotiations, the three were the only candidates and received a total of 227 votes. Thirty ballots were left blank.

The announcement that Talabani won drew applause, and many lawmakers crowded around him to offer congratulations. He was expected to be sworn in to his post Thursday.

"This is the new Iraq, where no sect or minority controls the whole country," parliament speaker Hajim al-Hassani said. "It is an Iraq where all the people are unified."

Talabani said he would work to secure his troubled nation, and he called on neighboring countries to help in the fight by preventing foreign insurgents from crossing into Iraq.

"Our people are patient," he said. "But there's a limit to their patience."

The Kurdish-led coalition won 75 of the 275 parliament seats in the Jan. 30 elections, a major victory for a group that spent years fighting Saddam's regime.

Kurds make up 20 percent of the country's 26 million people; Shiites make up 60 percent and the Sunni Arabs are roughly 15 to 20 percent.

Human Rights Minister Bakhtiyar Amin told The Associated Press that lawmakers had asked that Saddam and other jailed members of his former government be shown the process. *AP*

RIYADH—Up to 18 militants, including a number of most wanted al-Qaida suspects, have been killed in three days of clashes with Saudi security forces in the north of the kingdom, a security source told AFP Tuesday.

"Up to 18 gunmen have been killed, including some on the (most wanted) list," the source told AFP of the deadliest clashes so far in a two-year-old wave of Islamist violence.

Interior ministry spokesperson Brig. Gen. Mansur al-Turki told AFP that the three-day gun battle in Al-Rass, about 320 km north of Riyadh, had ended but security forces were still combing the area to evacuate casualties and collect evidence.

Security sources at the scene said earlier that security forces raided a house in which the suspected al-Qaida militants were holed up.

The security forces stormed the last house in which militants were barricaded after the gunmen had been moving from house to house, they said.

As of Tuesday morning, at least nine gunmen had been reported killed in the fighting that has raged since early Sunday.

Dubai-based Al-Arabiya television reported Monday that two leaders of a Saudi al-Qaida cell on Riyadh's list of 26 most wanted had been killed, identifying them as Saudi Saud al-Otaibi and Moroccan Abdel Karim al-Mejati.

The Spanish news agency EFE said Mejati was considered one of the masterminds of the March 2004 Madrid train bombings.

A total of 191 people died in the coordinated bombings of four commuter trains in Spain's worst ever terrorist attack, blamed on mainly Moroccan Islamist radicals linked to al-Qaida.

Quoting sources involved in the investigation, EFE said Mejati was believed to be a member of a Moroccan Islamist group, GICM, and to have been involved in a string of attacks in Casablanca in May 2003.

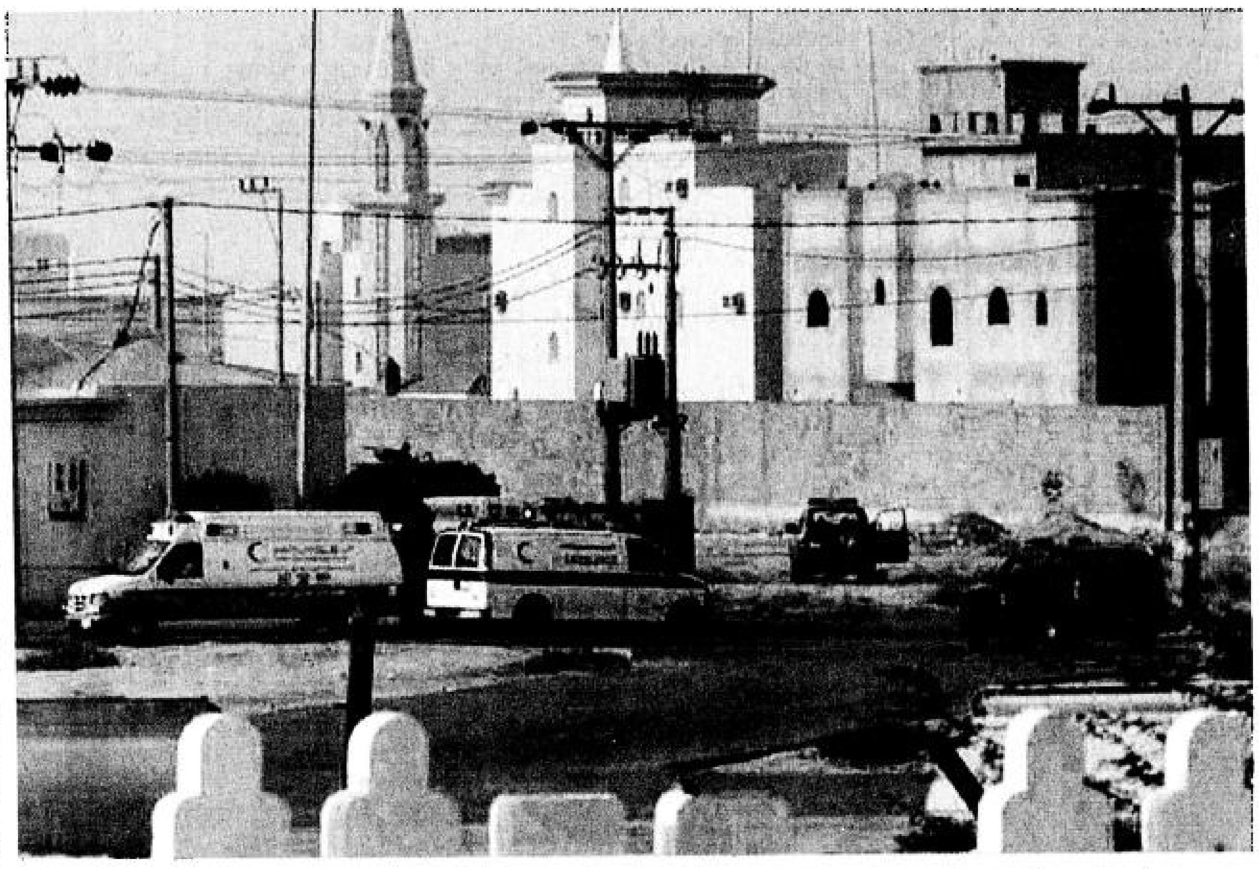
Two militants were killed in clashes Tuesday and a third gave himself up, Turki told AFP earlier, adding that several members of the security forces had been wounded, four of them seriously.

He could not confirm the reports about Otaibi and Mejati.

"We cannot for the moment reveal the identities of those killed or arrested," he said. "According to reports, these leaders ... are among them, but we need to confirm it."

The interior ministry said Monday that seven al-Qaida suspects were killed and another was critically injured.

"We want to take them alive but we will surround them until their military capabilities have been exhausted and try to avoid any losses among the security forces," Turki said. *AFP*



SAUDI policemen and ambulances stand alert at al-Rass, 355 km northwest of the capital, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia April 5 where a three-day shootout between Saudi security forces and suspected Islamic militants took place, reportedly leaving 18 armed extremists dead. AP

Princess Diana still queen in the hearts of loyal Britons

LONDON—Prince Charles may have chosen a new bride, but for many Britons the late Princess Diana will always reign as queen of their hearts.

The princess remains one of the 20th century's most poignant icons, and her lingering popularity more than seven years after her death has dulled the public's reception of Charles' future royal consort, Camilla Parker Bowles.

Despite years of live-in companionship with Britain's heir to the throne, Parker Bowles is still considered by the press a poor successor to the princess, and ridiculed by hardcore Diana fans as "Cowmilla."

But Charles' 57-year-old fiancee is ill-served by an impossible comparison with Diana, who remains frozen in time as a youthful beauty, wronged woman and loving mother.

Parker Bowles, though she was Charles' early sweetheart and an on-off lover for decades, has aged along with him, while fans still remember 19-year-old Diana Spencer with her first flush of fame, at her 1981 engagement to the future king.

Dying young, at 36, may have in fact been "wonderful" for Diana's legacy, royal biographer Nicholas Davies said.

"In many respects ... she was lucky to have died when she did," Davies, author of several books on Diana, the queen and royal family, told AFP.

"She still has her incredible youthful image. She would be well into her 40s by now, heading toward 50, when young ladies lose their looks. She wouldn't have enjoyed that at all ... In some respects, the fact that she died then has been wonderful for her memory."

Diana's death in an August 1997 car crash in Paris triggered an outpouring of grief and a wave of suicides.

Suicides went up 17 percent over the four weeks following the accident, with a spike of 45 percent among women aged 25 to 44, according to the British Journal of Psychiatry.

While 750,000 people turned out to watch her gala wedding procession through London, more than three million people followed her funeral procession and five million bought pop legend Elton John's specially dedicated album.

Years later, in 2002, a BBC poll ranked Diana Britain's third-greatest figure.

Last year a memorial fountain was erected in London's Hyde Park, and during the summer 5,000 people massed there each day.

Even now, Diana is the star of the show, with a ballet by Danish choreographer Peter Schaufuss recounting Diana's "fairy tale gone wrong" to the tune of kitschy pop music. *AFP*

Royal wedding apathy cheers Britain's republicans

LONDON—The wedding of Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles on Saturday is being greeted with one big yawn by the British public—and for the nation's nascent republican movement, that's good news.

Opponents of the monarchy say the distinct lack of enthusiasm is as good a sign as any that the British public is ready to consider, at least, the radical idea of an elected head of state.

"It certainly suggests that there's been a significant shift in public attitudes toward the monarchy," said Graham Smith, campaign coordinator for Republic, a pressure group.

"The strength of feeling has certainly come down considerably," he told AFP. "If you compare this wedding with the weddings of 20 or so years ago, the attitude is quite different."

Back in July 1981, some 750,000 people thronged the streets of London when Charles wedded Princess Diana in Saint Paul's Cathedral, where 3,500 invited guests filled the pews.

More than seven years after Diana's death, Charles will marry his longtime lover Parker Bowles before just 30 guests in the 17th century town hall in Windsor, with only a few thousand well-wishers likely to turn up outdoors.

Republic has seized upon the wedding—and the many gaffes that have preceded it—to stir up public interest in its campaign for an elected head of state under the slogan: "End the Royal Farce."

This week it is rolling out advertisements in three national newspapers, after handing out more than 20,000 leaflets appealing for "democracy—not genetic lottery."

Republican sentiment in Britain is small but significant, with one poll in the Daily Telegraph two months ago revealing that 23 percent think there should be no monarchy after Queen Elizabeth.

Another p oll, in March for the Daily Mail, found that 28 percent thought Britain would be better off without the monarchy—and that 67 percent were "unlikely" to watch this Saturday's wedding on television. *AFP*

Maid says Jackson shared bed, showered with boy

SANTA MARIA, Calif.—A former maid for Michael Jackson told jurors on Tuesday that he regularly shared his bed with "Home Alone" star Macaulay Culkin and another boy—whom she once discovered showering with the pop star.

The housekeeper, whose son testified on Monday that Jackson fondled him three times, offered a rare glimpse into life at Jackson's Neverland Valley Ranch, telling of his sleepovers with boys.

While cleaning Jackson's bedroom, she noticed that Culkin, a regular visitor to Neverland when he was 8 or 9, typically slept in the entertainer's bed, she said. Culkin has denied that Jackson molested him and is not expected to testify at the abuse trial.

The maid, who worked for Jackson between 1986 and 1991, told the jury that she once stumbled on another boy, age 8, in the shower with him.

"I came in and at first I thought they were playing in the bathtub or Jacuzzi and I didn't see them. ... I walked in and they were in the shower," she said, adding that two pairs of underwear lay on the floor nearby.

She said she could see two figures, Jackson and the boy, in the steamed-up shower and recognized the underwear from doing the singer's laundry.

"Mr. Jackson's, I knew, was white, and the little boy's, I knew, were colored, they were little green underwear, like neon green," said the maid, who with her son reached a civil settlement with Jackson in the mid-1990s.

The woman testified that whenever the 8-year-old boy stayed at Neverland he appeared to sleep in Jackson's bed and that once she found him and the performer watching television in bed together, naked from the waist up.

She also said that on several occasions she felt uncomfortable about the way Jackson was interacting with her son, but conceded on cross-examination by defense attorney Tom Mesereau that she never saw the entertainer molest him or anyone else. *Reuters*

POP STAR Michael Jackson leaves the courtroom in Santa Barbara County Superior Court in Santa Maria, with his parents Joe (left) and Katherine, at the end of the day in his child molestation trial April 5. REUTERS

Old Man of Chad claims to be the oldest human

PARIS—French-led fossil hunters have fired the latest salvo in a battle over Toumai, a seven-million-year-old fossil that, they contend, is the remains of the earliest human ever found.

Toumai came to the fore in 2002 when a team led by Michel Brunet of the University of Poitiers, central France, unveiled a nearly complete cranium, pieces of jawbone and several teeth that had been found in the Chadian desert.

Animal remains in the earth layers in which these pieces were found indicated the age at up to seven million years, making Toumai the earliest known hominid, or forerunner of *Homo sapiens*, ever discovered.

But the claim triggered dismay in Ethiopia and Kenya—the countries of the Great Rift Valley where humankind is commonly believed to have emerged—as well as rebuttals from within the paleontology community, which beneath its placid veneer can be viciously competitive.

Critics said that Toumai's cranium was too squashed to be that of a hominid—it did not have the brain capacity that gives humans primacy—and its small size indicated a creature of no more than 120 cm in height, about the size of a walking chimp.

In short, they said, Toumai had no right to be baptized with Brunet's hominid honorific of *Sahelanthropus tchadensis*. He simply a vulgar ape.

Toumai's supporters have now returned to the charge with two studies published on Thursday in Nature, the British weekly science journal.

Using 3D computer reconstructions which compare Toumai with gorillas and chimpanzees, a team led by Swiss anthropologist Christoph Zollikofer, say the angles of the skull and cranial capacity show that the fossil was clearly a hominid, not an African great ape. *AFP*

Blair, facing tight race, calls general elections

LONDON—British Prime Minister Tony Blair, eager for a third straight term in power for his Labour Party, called a general election Tuesday for May 5 amid signs that the race will be tighter than he would like.

"There will be a general election in Britain on May 5," declared Blair under bright skies outside Downing Street after he went to Buckingham Palace to ask Queen Elizabeth II to dissolve parliament, the traditional campaign start.

The date—exactly one month away—had been widely anticipated for a number of weeks, although it was announced 24 hours later than expected in the aftermath of Saturday's death of Pope John Paul II.

Labour—which is putting Britain's robust economy at the heart of its campaign—remains the favorite to win, despite widespread opposition to Blair's support for the Iraq war.

But a fresh crop of public opinion polls on Tuesday indicated that the main opposition Conservative Party is closing in, with the Liberal Democrats well back in third place.

"From now until May 5, I and my colleagues will be out every day, in every part of Britain, talking to the British people about our driving mission for a third term," said Blair, who turns 52 on May 6.

He carried his message to southwest England later in the day, telling a rally in the marginal seat of South Dorset: "This is the time to keep the progress going, move the country forward."

"Though the economy is strong, there's still things to do. Right around the country there are still people that need help with home ownership or with jobs, we need to keep living standards rising." But the Conservatives, who are vowing to cut taxes, fight crime and curb immigration, said Blair was not to be trusted.

"Beware yet another election where Mr Blair says one thing to get your vote on polling day and does something quite different afterwards," Conservative leader Michael Howard told a party rally in London.

"Mr Blair is already secretly grinning at the prospect of his third victory. Well, you don't have to settle for that." The first days of the campaign will be unusual, to say the least, with Blair going to the Vatican on Friday to attend the funeral of Pope John Paul II, then attending the wedding of Prince Charles to Camilla Parker Bowles the next day.

Parliament will meanwhile try to "wash up" what remains on its legislative agenda before closing on Monday.

One of Tuesday's opinion polls, in the Financial Times newspaper, put the Conservatives five points ahead of Labour at 39 percent, although this was only for people "absolutely certain" they would vote, a group which tends to favor the Conservatives.

The other polls, which included people uncertain about turning out on May 5, showed Labour still in the lead, but only by two to six percentage points. *AFP*

Bird flu death toll in Asia hits 50

HANOI—Bird flu deaths in Asia reached 50 Wednesday when Vietnamese medical officials reported a 10-year-old girl had died in the capital.

The girl, Nguyen Hai Yen, died on March 27 in Hanoi's St. Paul's hospital, a hospital doctor said, adding test reports from the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology were received on Monday.

Yen lived in a district of Hanoi, said the doctor who wished to remain unnamed.

Earlier, Vietnamese authorities confirmed another death whose details have not been released but has been included in the toll of the World Health Organization.

Since the end of 2003, the bird flu virus has killed 36 Vietnamese, 12 Thais and two Cambodians.

Vietnam last week started a monthlong campaign to clean up farms and try to wipe out the bird flu virus that has killed dozens of people across the country in the past year.

The campaign would focus on "cleaning up poultry farms and cages in all provinces and cities to stop the type A flu virus from spreading," said the health ministry.

Vietnam keeps reporting human casualties at regular intervals, even though the disease has been waning in poultry.

Thirty-five of Vietnam's 64 provinces and cities have been hit by the virus this year. According to a daily report by the agriculture ministry, all but two have now been clear of the disease for more than 21 days.

Health experts have warned the H5N1 virus could lead to a pandemic if it mutated into a form which could be easily transmitted between humans.

Localities nationwide have been asked to strengthen measures to combat avian influenza.

The National Steering Committee for Bird Flu Control said provinces which saw the recurrence of avian influenza had been required to obey orders from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to temporarily halt poultry breeding. *AFP*

US literary giant Saul Bellow dies at 89

WASHINGTON—Saul Bellow, the Nobel Prize winning legend of US literature who produced award winning novels such as "Herzog" and "Humboldt's Gift" died Tuesday at the age of 89, US media reported.

BELLOW

Bellow died at his home in Brookline, Massachusetts, with his fifth wife Janis and daughter at his side. His friend and attorney Walter Pozen told US media that Bellow had been ailing for some months.

As temperamental as he was talented, many critics considered Bellow one of the greatest American novelists of his era, on a par with Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry James, Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner.

He was awarded the Nobel Literature Prize in 1976 and had remained actively writing up until recent months.

Bellow also won a Pulitzer Prize in 1976 for "Humboldt's Gift," three US National Book Awards and numerous other honors.

He wrote more than a dozen works of fiction from "The Dangling Man" in 1944 to "Ravelstein" in 2000. His work has pitted him in bitter disputes with other leading members of the literary establishment as well as winning him acclaim.

Solomon Bellows was born June 10, 1915, in Lachine, Quebec, outside Montreal, into a family of Jewish Russian emigres.

He was raised in Chicago, which he used for many of his novels, and studied at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University where he earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology and sociology.

Bellow later taught for 30 years at the University of Chicago before leaving for a post in Boston to be nearer to his country retreat.

Bellow followed his first novel, "Dangling Man," with "The Victim" in 1947 and by 1948, a Guggenheim Fellowship allowed him to spend two years in Europe, much of it in Paris.

On that trip, he wrote "The Adventures of Augie March," which earned him a 1954 National Book Award. Other acclaimed works followed. He published "Seize The Day" in 1956, and "Henderson The Rain King" in 1959.

In 1964, "Herzog" won him a National Book Award, turning into a best seller.

Bellow served as a correspondent for Newsday newsmagazine during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

He returned to write "Mr. Sammler's Planet," which also won a National Book Award, and was published in 1970.

Bellow's early novels concentrated on topics such as how Americans coped with living through the 1930s depression and World War II. *AFP*

UN bares list of Darfur suspects

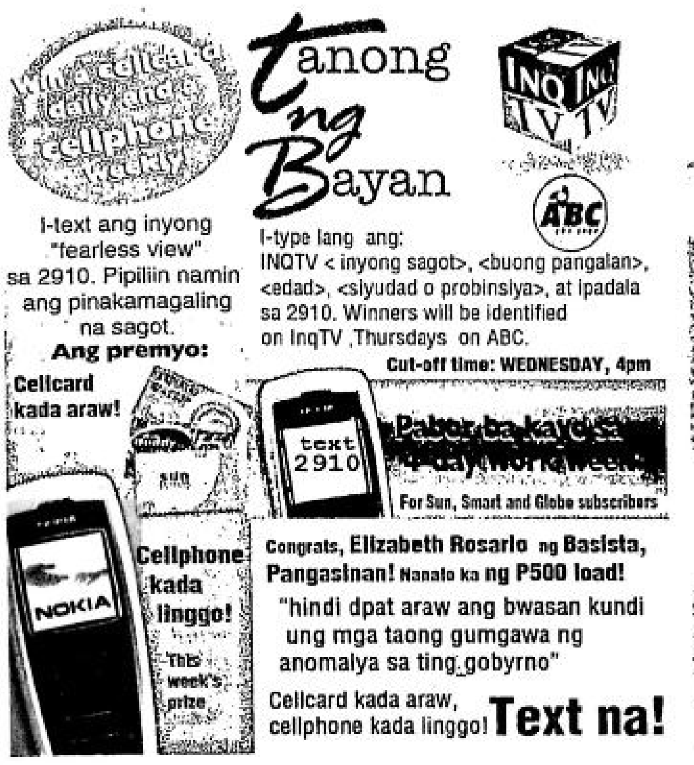
UNITED NATIONS—UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan gave the International Criminal Court on Tuesday a list of 51 people suspected of slaughter, rape and pillaging in Sudan's Darfur region, the first step toward a war crimes prosecution.

The sealed list was gathered by an independent commission sent by the U.N. Security Council to Darfur last year, which reported mass killings of civilians, systematic rape and burning of villages.

The Darfur case is the first referred by the Security Council to the tribunal, the world's first permanent criminal court. The United States, which opposes the court, gave it some legitimacy last week by abstaining in the referral vote rather than using its veto power to block the action.

Earlier on Tuesday the court, based in the Hague, received nine boxes of documents the commission had gathered in Darfur.

Annan passed on the list of 51 suspects recommended for trial to Luis Moreno-Ocampo, prosecutor of the criminal court. The list includes government officials, leaders of Arab militia known as Janjaweed, and rebels. *Reuters*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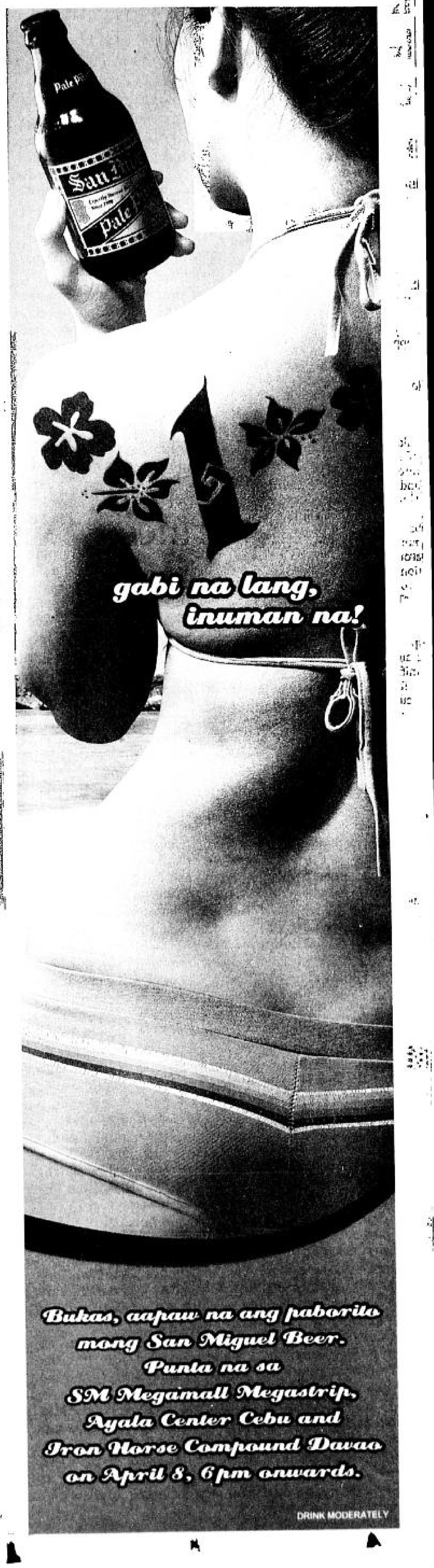
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OPINION

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Déjà vu

EDITORIAL

CERTAIN signs have been foreshadowing it, and those old enough to remember will feel a distinct sense of déjà vu over the Armed Forces' "Knowing the Enemy," a document containing a list of so-called enemies of the state. The list, which is presented to communities in the countryside by PowerPoint, includes Church, media, activist and party-list groups deemed either "communist fronts" or "dealing" with communist insurgents. It's apparently a hodgepodge of the state's usual suspects. Talk about the bad old days of the dictatorship.

But apart from the déjà vu, there is also a distinct sense of alarm. During the tumultuous period leading to Ferdinand Marcos' imposition of martial law, and during that benighted era itself, the Church, media and activist groups that took to the frontlines and valiantly gave voice to public despair over state terrorism were branded subversives—a label that brought clear danger to life and limb. And indeed, the issue of the maimed, the dead and the *desaparecidos* of that time continues to fester. Even now, decades later, justice is still firmly beyond grasp.

Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado has confirmed the existence of the document even if his boss, AFP chief Gen. Efren Abu, has disclaimed knowledge of it. And Honrado is decidedly unapologetic over the listing of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Courage, Pamalakaya and party-list and other activist groups as "enemies." He hedges on the listing of the bishops (even as he casually notes "clergymen in picket lines") and says they're actually "targets for influence." More disturbing, he wants the groups thus listed to take it upon themselves to prove that they have no links with the CPP-NPA.

Is this any way for the chief of the AFP's Civil Relations Service to behave? In this democratic space carved out of the dark days of martial law and touted to be a mark of President Macapagal-Arroyo's "strong republic"?

The standards that the military has employed in coming up with the list of "enemies" remain in the realm of conjecture. What is clear, however, is that those listed—bishops, priests, nuns, lawmakers, teachers, students, farmers, laborers, rights advocates, journalists, urban poor, indigenous peoples—have not only been giving voice to public despair over the abysmal quality of life of the majority of the population but also loudly seeking redress for murders most foul. They are, in short, rocking the boat.

The NUJP has been tirelessly raising an outcry against the killing of journalists (by its count three in the first three months of 2005, with two failed attempts; 13 in 2004; 66 since 1986). It has been reminding authorities that the suspected killers come from the ranks of the police and military, whether retired or in the active service.

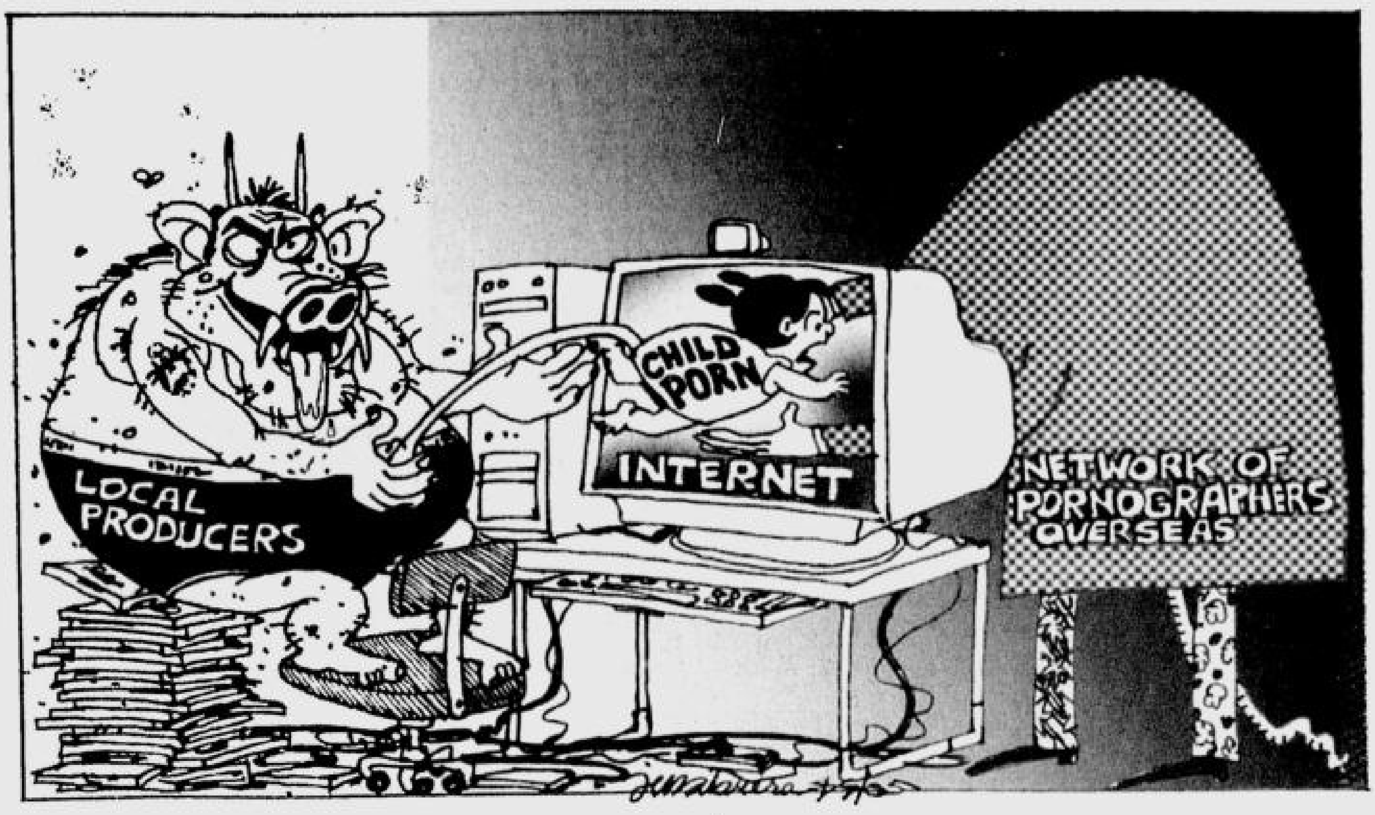
The CBCP, in pastoral statements rarely as strongly worded, has demanded that the Arroyo administration drop its seeming indifference and immediately address the killing of three key supporters of striking workers at Hacienda Luisita (classic symbol of the agrarian conflict that has long characterized this country and that illustrates the ever yawning gap between the wealthy and the impoverished). It has called attention to the fact that "the military is suspected to author these assassinations."

The party-list groups Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and allied organizations have long been sounding the alarm over the killing (18 since the start of the year) and involuntary disappearance (six) of political activists. They have maintained that only the AFP and its paramilitary units have the capability to mount such attacks "right at your doorstep" on a nationwide scale.

Can observers attentive to cues and patterns be faulted for thinking that the military's "Knowing the Enemy" amounts to a hit list of those who cannot be bullied into silence?

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, a survivor of the horrors of martial law, put it poignantly in a statement last month: "At least during martial law it was declared. We knew what organizations were outlawed. Today there are no formal declarations, and yet it seems agents of the state target legitimate organizations, activists and even party-list groups…"

The implications are chilling.



Mixing up bus stops

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"I STOOD next to Pope John Paul as our Filipino choir sang at Lorenzo Ruiz's canonization," wrote our former maid. "Afterwards, he spoke to us, just like a father."

Tering opted to remain in Rome after the United Nations transferred us to Bangkok. "That's a long way from Cebu, kid," we wrote back to her.

"Just like a father." That theme resounds in interviews with people the world over. But it resonates for Filipinos. Critics scoff that we cherish family over other worthwhile values: nationality, community, globalization, etc.

But to youngsters who sang with him at the World Youth Day, or to Tala Leprosarium patients, or to Muslims in Davao, John Paul was "family."

In Italy today, there are over 80,000 overseas Filipino workers (illegals included). Tering will queue up with many of them along Via della Conciliazione for hours for a chance to file past John Paul's body and bid goodbye. He's family, she'll write.

The pontiff will be laid to rest below San Pietro's main altar with the 17th-century Bernini columns. Within that crypt lie many predecessors, including John XXIII, Pius XII and Paul VI.

It's built over the Circus where Caligula and Nero once gamboled. Peter from Galilee was crucified here in the year 64. Head down, the fisherman insisted, because he wasn't worthy of a Master he denied thrice.

"On the way to his own crucifixion, Peter probably glimpsed that obelisk in the middle of this square," a Food and Agriculture Organization colleague, the late Wilhelm Schulte, mused as we walked through the piazza.

Caligula, who once appointed his stallion pro-consul, brought the obelisk to Rome from Hierapolis in the year 37. In 1586, the 825-feet obelisk was topped with a cross, containing a relic of the Cross from Calvary.

Peter was buried in the cemetery, adjoining the Circus. Among the graves there, one bore the text in Greek: "Peter Is Here." Late in the second century, a monument was erected over that tomb. And in 324-329, during Constantine's reign, the first church rose over the Fisherman's remains.

It is here where the 264th successor to Peter will be buried Friday.

Here, John Paul will remain accessible to more people than in a grave in Poland. It's not just about those Mondays-to-Saturdays tours through the papal crypts. Tering will insist John Paul belongs to us, too. Was it Isaiah who said: "I have made you a light to the nations"?

"Live that when you die even the undertaker will be sorry," Mark Twain once wrote. The Turkish gunman regrets he tried to kill the pontiff who forgave him. That pardon, like John Paul's dying, proclaimed "values that endure even after the sun goes out."

"I've never seen more interest in extreme unction than that sparked by news reports of John Paul anointing," a friend marveled. "Please explain to our listeners what the last rites are," CNN's Jonathan Mann asked his network's Vatican reporter Julie Gallagher, as networks scrambled to explain its significance.

Anointing of the sick, with oil, is conferred, not only on the dying but on the seriously ill, the cautious reporter responded. That's the ancient rule. An aide anointed John Paul minutes after Mehmet Ali Agca shot him.

The rite goes back to James of the apostolic church, EWTN station explained. "Is any one among you sick?" wrote this apostle. "Let him bring in the priests of the church and pray over him, anointing him with oil…." For centuries, this rite has been recognized as one of the seven sacraments.

Sacraments and liturgy are probably the ultimate democracy. Rites for a pope, administered by a cardinal, are exactly the same a lowly priest gives to a slum dweller. The same prayers for the dying are said for bishops or *sacadas*: "Go forth Christian soul…."

Whenever a tomb is sealed, in papal crypt or weed-choked town graveyards, the same invocation is invoked for princes or paupers: "May the angels and saints welcome you." The farewell for Hamlet, in Shakespeare's 1599 play of the same title, echoes that prayer: "Now cracks a noble heart/Good night, sweet prince. May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

At a UN posting in Rome, one would now and then come face to face with John Paul: at a Christmas midnight Mass, at his addresses to meetings, and even on occasional mix-ups.

The *capo-linea* (end-of-the-line-stop) for my bus, I thought, would be a block from the Spanish Steps. Wrong. It turned out to be the color-spangled Flower Market. And the connecting bus whisked by the Termini and finally stopped outside the Vatican.

There, John Paul was presiding over the beatification of English Catholics martyred four centuries back. Atop the crypt of Peter, where he'll be buried Friday, the pontiff called these men and women "Servants of God." Blinking in the Roman autumn sunlight, after the ceremonies, I mused: "What does it all mean?"

Like the Visayan martyr Blessed Pedro Calungsod, these are men and women whom—the Jesuit theologian Catalino Arevalo wrote—"we can hold up to question the authenticity and firmness of our faith, which though badly misunderstood among so many of our people, still form…the framework of meaning within which the days of our lives are lived."

For those who still mix up all those *capo-lineas*, it means: those who live by the faith of a John Paul, are given, even now, "a share in the conquest of death." That's what the long queues, where Tering stands, celebrate.

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E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Right to doubt

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WHILE on the subject of the Vatican—a couple of weeks ago, during a "Passion of the Lord" service commemorating Christ's death, Fr. Reneiro Cantalamessa, officially Preacher of the Papal Household, fulminated against "The Da Vinci Code" before an audience of cardinals.

"In an unending stream of novels, films and plays," he said, "writers manipulate the figure of Christ under cover of imaginary and nonexistent new documents and discoveries…. Our time, obsessed as it is with sex, seems unable to portray Jesus in any other way than a homosexual, or as one who taught that salvation was to be found in uniting with the feminine principle and gave the example by marrying Mary Magdalene. The passion and crucifixion of Christ? All later inventions of the Church!"

A few weeks before Cantalamessa unleashed his broadside, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, who has been leading the charge against the book, urged Catholics to shun it like rotten food. He asked Catholic bookstores to pull it out from their shelves.

I am at least glad of one thing, which is that neither Father Cantalamessa nor Cardinal Bertone put a death sentence on Dan Brown's head. Although Brown himself may not be entirely consoled, if he believes in what he says. Not least of which is that the Opus Dei are a fanatical crew not loath to carry out murder to remove those who oppose them. You never know. After all, Henry II got Thomas Beckett—a friend of his whom he installed as Archbishop of Canterbury, only to be opposed by him—killed by shouting in a moment of fury: "What cowards have I brought up in this court? Who will rid me of this meddlesome priest?" Four knights, taking that expostulation literally, went to Canterbury and in the middle of a Mass hacked the Archbishop to death.

But the Catholic clergy's reaction to "The Da Vinci Code" is at least nothing like the ayatollahs' reaction to Salman Rushdie's "The Satanic Verses." Rushdie's title, taken from the verses Satan put in the prophet Muhammed's mouth, according to Islamic belief, was taken literally by Islamic clerics and construed as an attack on their faith. In 1989, the Ayatollah Khomeini meted out a *fatwa*, or death sentence, on Rushdie. He justified it by saying that the publication of the book by "the world devourers" (the West) is a calculated move aimed at rooting out religion and religiousness, and above all, Islam and its clergy." He failed to note that Rushdie was a more ferocious critic of the West, especially of America's hegemonic ambitions, than the East.

That *fatwa* was supported by, among other people, the former Cat Stevens, a big musical figure in the '70s, who subsequently turned devout Muslim and became an imam. Each time I hear "Father and Son" now, I am reminded only that sons have a way of becoming their fathers, and worse. He should have heeded his words.

Fortunately, Brown doesn't have to live "in a bubble," as Rushdie himself has described his life after the *fatwa*, being insulated from life for fear of losing his own. Of course, Brown isn't Rushdie, or indeed Umberto Eco, who wrote still another book that dealt with Christian intolerance, specifically the Inquisition, though the hero of "The Name of the Rose" was a friar with the deductive abilities of Sherlock Holmes. But though Brown doesn't have to fear for his life, he has to fear for his sales. He has already denied being anti-Christian (as has Rushdie being anti-Islam), to no avail.

In fact, the least of Cantalamessa's worries is "The Da Vinci Code's" kinkiness. It is not that the book makes out Christ to have married Mary Magdalene and had children by her—an idea already explored by Nikos Kazantzakis in "The Last Temptation of Christ," though in the "what if" mode—it is that it makes out Christ to be completely human. Brown's proposition is that Christ's divinity was proclaimed not by his disciples but by Constantine after he turned Christianity into a state religion. That, of course, strikes at a core belief of Christianity—as its very name suggests—the one thing that separates it from the other major religions. In Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism, God is transcendent, he does not take corporeal form, his word is merely transmitted by holy men, or prophets. In Islam, Christ is just one of the prophets, albeit a minor one. It is not hard to see why Brown should unnerve the Catholic clergy the way Rushdie unnerved the imams.

I myself can't see why Christians should buy Cantalamessa's diatribe. Faith is not blind, or it shouldn't be. Faith will always be fragile if it is something that prospers, or is allowed to, only by ignorance or lack of challenge. Or worse, by treating challenges as the devil's machinations and moving to stamp them by murder of the body or soul, or both. I have seen enough intolerance, from religious and secular faiths, to last me a lifetime. Oh yes, there are secular faiths too, which punish "heretics" with the murder of the body and soul, the murder of the soul taking the form of expulsion from the fold—the secular equivalent of excommunication—and body in the form of "killing fields."

I've always thought you could still be a Christian while saying, like Rushdie, "I am a modern, and modernist, urban man, accepting uncertainty as the only constant, change as the only sure thing." Or you could still be a Christian while saying, as a friend of mine, a priest, did more insightfully some years ago, "Faith is the tension between doubt and certainty." He tried to show it in a poem about a priest who is gripped by that tension at the moment he hoists the host to sanctify it. Faith is a plunge, but it is not plunging willy-nilly.

People have a right to believe? Yes. But they do have a right to doubt, too, along with it.

Like preparing for jubilee—in 48 hours!

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I WAS able to attend the "barrio fiesta" tendered by Senate President Frank Drilon and the Senate at the Coconut Palace—as well as the luncheon hosted by Speaker Jose de Venecia at the Manila Hotel—for the delegates to the Inter-Parliamentary Union general assembly. I must say that the preparations for the IPU assembly went very well. It's a tribute to this country or its stability that all 1,200 delegates came, many of them accompanied by their wives.

At the Coconut Palace last Monday evening, they had a taste of the world-famous Filipino hospitality—Pinoy delicacies, music and dances as the balmy breeze from the Bay enhanced the restored splendor of Bobby Mañosa's Coconut Palace. The distaff side of the Senate, led by Mila Drilon, rendered a song under the aegis of Cristina Ponce Enrile, known for her stage prowess since her college days. The Senate ladies who couldn't sing, as Sen. Dick Gordon's wife Kate put it, had to be the *sagalas* in the Santa Cruzan staged for the delegates. Lending solicitous presence were Tourism Secretary Ace Durano and PNP Deputy Chief Reynaldo Velasco, the IPP Task Force commander. The delegates enjoyed themselves immensely but knocked off early for another long day of work. (They obviously take their work seriously.) As to whether the country scored in tourism, it should be stressed that 90 percent of the delegates are visiting the Philippines for the first time!

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I have been a close watcher of Rome for many years now and it has always been my favorite city. My husband and I wanted to be there for the event that, as Speaker De Venecia pointed out, won't come again in over a hundred years—the funeral of someone with such a towering shadow as John Paul II. Thus, when the President's invitation came for my husband to join her official party to JPII's funeral, we welcomed it, even though it was understood that I could accompany him only as part of the "unofficial party," paying my own way (for the record, I'm doing so).

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But I never expected my husband's being part of the official delegation would cause such a big fuss. This Christian nation in Asia must be the only one on earth that would not even allow a dignified mourning for one of the world's greatest religious leaders. Why, even Prince Charles has seen fit to postpone his wedding so he could attend the Pope's funeral!

Rep. Rolex Suplico, whose wife Marites Cancio is a friend from way back, asks why Ambassador Thelmo Cunanan is a member of the RP delegation. Suplico fails to realize that as SSS chair, my husband represents over 26 million members, a number far bigger than any congressional constituency. There are only 2,000 SSS members in Italy, which is grossly disproportionate to the 100,000 OFWs in Italy, and this is one of the things that Ambassador Cunanan, who assumed the SSS chairmanship last September, intends to look into in Rome. Suplico seems to think that the RP delegation should be the sole domain of congressmen, but the problem is that many of them only know how to junket.

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At De Venecia's IPU luncheon, I ran into French Ambassador Renee Veyret and asked her if President Jacques Chirac would be attending the funeral. "Of course, my President is attending," she stressed and then explained that about 80 percent of the French people are Catholics, although the Church there exhibits a rather independent streak (perhaps typical of the French). She also noted that much of private education in France is in the hands of the religious orders, just like here. I might add that the educational record of religious orders remains among the Church's major legacies around the world—especially here. Veyret rattled off the names of leading schools in RP, which were founded by French religious, among them, the Assumption Convent ("which has produced a President in GMA,") and St. Paul de Chartres which began over a hundred years ago in Dumaguete.

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Two million people, including the world's high and mighty, are expected to descend on Rome for JPII's wake and funeral. My Rome-based Jesuit friend, Fr. Joe Quilong-quilong of Cebu, reports that the Roman authorities, still grappling with the mind-boggling logistics and security challenge, have likened it to "organizing a Millennium Jubilee celebration—in 48 hours."

Last Monday mid-morning, Father Joe texted me that it was 3 a.m. in Rome, and he had been in St. Peter's Square since an hour ago with thousands of people driven there that early by the same thought: line up now so that when the Basilica opened its doors at 5 a.m., they won't wait long to view JPII's body that day. Father Joe said that the day before, people waited for as long as six hours. But at 6 a.m. Roman time, Father Joe was still outside. He noted that the waiting crowds were praying the Rosary, and these reminded him so much of Edsa I; occasionally, the people would break out into a spontaneous applause which, he said, is the traditional Italian way to honor the dead. The square was all lit up but by contrast, the papal apartments were pitch-black, a sign that its occupant was no longer there.

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As you folks read this column, my husband and I should already have arrived in Rome with President Macapagal-Arroyo. Tonight we'll try our luck in queuing up. Incidentally, many friends called when they learned we were going to Rome, asking that we pray at JPII's tomb for their various intentions. I intend to do so, but whether we could even get near it is another story. This indicates that, in the minds of many, JPII, who canonized more saints in his 27 years than all the popes put together, will himself be a saint in the not too distant future.

John Paul II, beloved pilgrim

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IT was springtime in January in the souls of millions when Pope John Paul II came to visit the Philippines for the second time 10 years ago in 1995. Like a homecoming pilgrim, he came. It is seedtime, he said in so many words, referring to the promise the youth held for the turn of the millennium, as he rallied them to plunge into "the great adventure of living life well."

Think of that quote.

World Youth Day in 1995 in Manila will be etched in history books as days of wonder and joy ineffable. Four million gathered in one place to pray and commune with each other, to be blessed, to be one. Only Filipinos could throw a spiritual fiesta such as that one.

How wonderful. How wonderful for him to be in our tight embrace and us in his.

A thousand images of this blessed land he was taking home with him, he said before waving goodbye. The thousands of words he said to us we will remember and forever keep in our hearts.

I was one of those assigned to cover his visit, to catch his every word in places where he spoke. The reporters in the police beat had an even more daunting task, to wade into the throng, to watch out, just in case.

Those of us who kept watch at the Papal Visit press office at the PICC got copies of the Pope's speeches just a few minutes before he delivered them, never much earlier. Then we had to run off to catch him as there was no telling whether he would stick to the prepared text. I had kept a lot of the 1995 papal stuff in my files. Here are some choice quotes that could remind us to live a little better, love a little stronger as Filipinos.

"Too many young people do not realize that they themselves are the ones who are mainly responsible for giving a worthwhile meaning to their lives. The mystery of human freedom is at the heart of the great adventure of living life well."—**World Youth Day prayer vigil at Rizal Park.**

"What does the Church look for in the Filipino youth? For help in saving your own generation from the futility, frustration and emptiness in which so many of your contemporaries find themselves."—**Meeting with students at the UST parade grounds.**

"A situation where economic wealth and political power are concentrated in the hands of a few is, as you have written, 'an affront to human dignity and solidarity.' Too many families remain without land to till or a home to live in, and too many people are without employment and basic services. Your task must be to help create a new attitude, a conviction shaped by the principle of the social purpose of power and wealth, which can lead to appropriate changes in the prevailing order."—**to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.**

"Today, more than ever, the followers of the various religious traditions need to know each other better in order to work together in defending those common human and spiritual values without which a society worthy of man cannot be built."—**at the 25th anniversary of Radio Veritas Asia.**

"If you defend the inalienable dignity of every human being, you will be revealing to the world the true face of Jesus Christ, who is one with every man, every woman and every child, no matter how poor, no matter how weak or handicapped."—**World Youth Day prayer vigil at Rizal Park.**

"Your firm stand against the pessimism and selfishness of those who plot against the splendor of human sexuality and human life is an essential demand of your pastoral ministry and of your service to the Filipino people."—**to the Filipino bishops.**

"I take with me a thousand images of the Filipino people. I know your desire for greater justice and a better life for yourself and your children. No one can underestimate the difficulties you face and the hard work that lies ahead."—**Farewell speech at the airport**

"Let me express this call in the words of a song which I learned when I was still in my own country. The song goes: 'Come with me to save the world; for already it's the 20th century.' Indeed the 20th century is now coming to an end. So Christ says: 'Come with me into the Third Millennium, to save the world.'"—**at the Mass for the International Youth Forum delegates at UST.**

"The religious traditions of very ancient cultures remain powerful forces in the East, and present you with particular challenges. The Church esteems these spiritual traditions as living expressions of the soul of vast groups of people. They carry within them the echo of thousands of years searching for God."—**to the Asian Bishops.**

Well, as they say, everyone has a story to tell. I have mine and it dates back to 1981 during the first visit of Pope John Paul II. I got to write about it only in 1995 ("The Pope launched my writing career") in the INQUIRER.

The first, and I mean the first, feature story I ever wrote in my life in 1980 got me and the magazine editor (now the INQUIRER's editor in chief) in big trouble with the Marcos dictatorship.

Six months later, on Feb. 21, 1981, Pope John Paul II handed me a rock trophy for what I wrote.

I was not even a journalist at that time. I was with a church-related human rights organization. I was trained in behavioral science and for years my world was psychometrics and counseling, until I became a religious novice and metamorphosed into a human rights worker. That was when the writing began. Somehow, this JPII clinched it and so the writing continues to this day.

Well, what has it been like to have pen in hand? Lines from JPII's own poem ("The Quarry") give a picture of it: "Hands are the heart's landscape. They split sometimes/like ravines into which an undefined force rolls."

Goodbye JPII. May angels sing thee to thy rest.

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Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

The cardinals

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

A CLOUD of crimson—the cardinals of the Catholic Church—is the secondary spectacle in the ceremonies attending the death and burial of Pope John Paul II. There seems to be much confusion about what cardinals are. The fullest, and most accurate, discussion about who they are, and what they do, is in the Catholic Encyclopedia (easily accessible online).

For Catholics and non-Catholics alike, however, some things should be made clear concerning cardinals. The first thing is that cardinals do not represent a higher order of the clergy (those who have received the sacrament of holy orders—the deacons, priests and bishops).

In fact, cardinals are individuals who have been granted a title (which has corresponding privileges and duties) by the pope. In the past, it wasn't necessary for a cardinal to be a priest: popes, as recent as Paul VI, considered making a layman, the theologian Jacques Maritain, a cardinal.

Comparing it with royalty is the best way to understand what a cardinal is. In traditional British terminology, the British sovereign "created" dukes; in the same way, to this day, when a pope makes someone a cardinal, he "creates" him, meaning, he adds dignity (ecclesiastical) to a person. That is why cardinals are called the princes of the Church, which is what they are. In the old days of royalty, the honorific for cardinals, "Your Eminence," was shared by ecclesiastical prince-electors who had the hereditary right to elect the Holy Roman Emperor. In diplomatic protocol, Catholic cardinals are internationally acknowledged as having the protocol rank of a prince. The gravest responsibility of a cardinal, is, of course, to elect a pope; also, to advise the pope, and protect the Church, which is why their robes are red, the color of blood.

There are three kinds of cardinals: cardinal bishops, cardinal priests, and cardinal deacons. (In current practice, all cardinals are bishops; but in the past, they weren't, hence the distinctions.) They constitute the College of Cardinals, and their meetings with the pope are known as consistories, which are either public or secret: confusingly, it is public consistories that are called extraordinary (because they are rarely held), while secret consistories are termed ordinary (because they are more often the case). It is during consistories that the pope announces to the gathered cardinals that he has created new cardinals. At times, the pope announces that he has created a cardinal but keeps the latter's name in secret for reasons of security. Such a cardinal is called a cardinal *in pectore*. The cardinal remains unknown until his name is revealed.

There are reports that one such cardinal *in pectore* will be revealed to the cardinals now gathered in Rome. That person effectively became cardinal from the moment he was anonymously made one by the pope; he only formally assumes his duties (the most important of which is to help elect the next pope) when his name is finally revealed.

At this time, as the cardinals bid farewell to the late pope and prepare to elect the next, they are duty-bound to study the regulations for the election of a pope and to bind themselves to them. John Paul II explicitly commanded them to do this by requiring them to take the following oath, after reading the regulations:

"We, the Cardinals of Holy Roman Church, of the Order of Bishops, of Priests and of Deacons promise, pledge and swear, as a body and individually, to observe exactly and faithfully all the norms contained in the Apostolic Constitution Universi Dominici Gregis of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II, and to maintain rigorous secrecy with regard to all matters in any way related to the election of the Roman Pontiff or those which, by their very nature during the vacancy of the Apostolic See, call for the same secrecy," at which point each individual cardinal adds, "And I, N. Cardinal N., so promise, pledge and swear," thereupon placing his hand on the Gospels and concluding, "so help me God and these Holy Gospels which I now touch with my hand."

The cardinals are then instructed to begin meditating on the coming papal election. In John Paul II's words, "they shall entrust to two ecclesiastics known for their sound doctrine, wisdom and moral authority the task of presenting to the cardinals two well-prepared meditations on the problems facing the Church at the time and on the need for careful discernment in choosing the new Pope." Past accounts of papal elections indicate that the words of the meditations often influence the cardinals (at this point about to become cardinal-electors), placing them in the proper frame of mind as they begin thinking of who should be the next pope.

The late pope's injunction prohibiting overaged cardinals from voting, which dates back to similar injunctions made by Paul VI, has also been reported to have an influence on the way cardinals think: "In a most earnest and heartfelt way I recommend this prayer to the venerable Cardinals who, by reason of age, no longer enjoy the right to take part in the election of the Supreme Pontiff. By virtue of the singular bond with the Apostolic See which the Cardinalate represents, let them lead the prayer of the People of God, whether gathered in the Patriarchal Basilicas of the city of Rome or in places of worship in other particular Churches, fervently imploring the assistance of Almighty God and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit for the Cardinal electors, especially at the time of the election itself. They will thereby participate in an effective and real way in the difficult task of providing a Pastor for the universal Church."

Home

YOUNG BLOOD

Carla Teresa Taruc-Porticos

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I AM counting the weeks left before I am finally home. I miss home. And the "home" I am referring to is not where my favorite pillow is, or where you can find me barefoot on rag clothes while watching my favorite TV show. I am referring to "my home," "our home"—the Philippines.

Nope, I haven't been out of the country for years. In fact, I've been away for only a month and a half, my longest stay outside the country so far. Right now, I'm in a vacation, having joined my husband who works here.

Singapore as we all know is one of the hottest tourist destinations in Southeast Asia. Singaporeans are used to seeing all kinds of people—Chinese, Caucasians, Malay, name it; they're all here, year-round. Singapore offers some of Asia's best tourist attractions. There is a wide variety of food choices and, indeed, Singapore is a "shop-a-holic's paradise." Needless to say, this country has redefined itself to cradle tourists from all over the world.

Once, while I was waiting for my husband in front of a store in Paragon—home to the world's most expensive brands—a man approached to ask me questions for a survey. I obliged. He asked me if I was Singaporean and I proudly said, "No, I'm a Filipino." He quickly added, "Are you a student here?" to which I replied, "I'm here on vacation." He further asked me how I find Singapore, to which I found myself tongue-tied. He put words into my mouth, "Singapore is very clean, *la*?" But those were not the words I wanted to say. I was about to utter "bad customer service for a well-known tourist destination," but I had second thoughts, I was adamant I might hurt his ego. Being the polite Pinoy we are known for, I just nodded.

Singapore is indeed clean and, yes, very green. I was delighted to see birds, mostly crows, flocking even the country's busiest shopping district—the Orchard Road. The government is aggressively campaigning on cleanliness, imposing fines on eating or drinking in MRT and buses. Trash bins are everywhere. Schoolchildren are also doing their part in the campaign. Yet, it is an exaggeration to say "you couldn't see a single trash in Singapore's streets," because there are.

I've heard before about Singapore's strict rules, especially against chewing gum, smoking and jaywalking. A month and a half's stay in Singapore is enough for me to say, this country is far from perfection. I have to cover my nose whenever a man smoking in public passes by me. And I shake my head in disbelief whenever people cross the streets while the "red man" is still on.

Yet for all the imperfections, Singapore is still, perhaps, Southeast Asia's richest country.

So it kept me thinking, why can't we do it in the Philippines? Why is Manila so polluted and dirty? Then I got the point. It is illogical to compare the Philippines and Singapore.

For one, Singapore is not even half the size of Metro Manila. This country is so small, one end-to-end ride of the MRT's EastWest line and you've been all over Singapore. The best part of it is that the trip wouldn't even take you more than two hours. Also, traveling within the country is so convenient since it is not made up of smaller islands, unlike ours. The population is so small, perhaps, around three million, causing newly inaugurated Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong to boost government benefits for pregnant women. While Metro Manila alone has how many, eight million?

However, I am not saying that we should not exert any effort to be "like Singapore" because, indeed, there are a lot of lessons to be learned from that country's experience. It is just that it's not as easy as we think it is because the situations are totally different. I am also sick and tired of hearing foreigners cringe whenever they describe Manila. I even argued with a Malaysian friend after he described Jakarta as "very much like Manila." Manila is much better. Believe me, I've been to Jakarta.

Singapore is also banking on its people's ability to speak the English language. The Philippines should do the same and more because we have more right to be proud of our ability to speak the English language. The mushrooming industry of call centers in Manila and Cebu is proof enough of how good we are in the language and, moreover, in customer service. Once, I was ordering for a plain waffle from a bakeshop and quickly changing my mind, I ordered "with margarine filling instead." The "Auntie" (that's how they call older female Singaporeans of Chinese origin), who was serving me kept on saying with the distinct "Singlish" accent, "I don't understand. I don't understand what you're saying, *la*." I kept on telling her, loudly and more clearly almost spelling the word to her "MAR-GA-RINE!" but she couldn't really get me. An educated-looking customer at the queue asked me "You mean butter?" I said, "Yes! But it says here (pointing to the menu) margarine, not butter." They conversed in Mandarin and the Auntie, finally getting what I meant, almost shouted, "Ahhh, that's why I cannot understand you, you mean 'maljalin!'"

The Philippines and the Filipinos have much more to offer. With our natural resources and skilled human resources, we cannot go wrong. It is just a matter of hard work, strong will and determination, and sheer honesty from our people and the government. We can do it better than others can. I just hope this happens soon because my husband and the rest of the eight million Filipinos working abroad miss "home."

Carla Teresa Taruc-Porticos, 26, is a Communication Arts graduate of the University of the Philippines Los Baños. She is pursuing a master's degree in Communication Arts also in UPLB and now in the stage of writing her thesis, which she is doing in Singapore. She hopes to graduate this April.

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THEY SAID

No way

"I don't know how many ways to say no, so let me just say it. I don't have any desire to run for president. I don't intend to. I won't do it."

—US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

Unchristian

"I'm too much of a Christian to have wished him death."

—Former Abu Sayyaf hostage Renate Wallert of Germany on bandit leader Commander Robot's death

Attend to people's needs first

THIS government has no moral authority to collect taxes because it has failed miserably in its most basic of functions.

A government collects taxes from its people based on the premise that it will use the funds to provide services for the people. While this government is bleeding the people dry by asking more taxes, it is at the same time systematically cutting back on social services and passing many of its obligations on to the private sector. And the private sector willfully obliges, taking government incapacity as an opportunity to gain profits from captive consumers.

This government asks the people to shell out more money. But for what? To cover up for its inefficiency and fiscal mismanagement!

We challenge this administration to perform its functions and obligations to the people first before asking them for additional taxes such as VAT. People are ready to contribute more to the Treasury for as long as they see every peso they pay going back to them in the form of much-needed services. Contrary to the UP 11 position—that the proposed VAT rate increase will "stave off a crisis and contribute funds for social development and infrastructure"—our coalition believes that this government will only use the expected VAT yield to service the gargantuan public debt and to maintain its good standing with creditors.

The entire public sector debt must be thoroughly examined in a debt audit. We urge the Senate to approve immediately the joint resolution creating a Congressional Commission on the Debt Audit that the Lower House has already approved last September.

We also challenge the government to stop paying all illegitimate debts, including the remaining $48-million balance for the overpriced and mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. The coalition likewise calls for the review of privatization programs covering public services and utilities.

Corruption and ineptitude are virtually systemic in the tax bureaucracy. These are the main reasons for the government's failure to generate the correct amount of revenues. The people are put at the mercy of a flawed and inefficient tax collection system.

Even Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and a proponent of the VAT bill, admitted that the government is losing P100 billion to P140 billion because of tax leakages. Addressing even half of these leakages is already an alternative to the VAT rate increase, which will only yield P30 billion.

The Freedom from Debt Coalition demands that before the government should think about imposing new taxes, it should first provide the much-needed, basic social services to the people, audit all public sector debts and score major successes in its campaign against graft and corruption.

—ANA MARIA NEMENZO,
president,
Freedom from Debt Coalition,
ananemenzo@yahoo.com

Debate the population issue openly

ON BEHALF of the members of the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation Inc. (PLCPD), I commend the INQUIRER for its March 8 editorial ("Useful debate").

At a time when the Catholic hierarchy and its allied organizations view with disfavor the population and reproductive health policies being pushed by Congress, objective media can serve as a big boost to the morale of the advocates of pro-population management.

. For some time, the exchange of views on this issue has been quite intense, at times turning unpleasant. For sure, it raised the issue high in the public consciousness. And the PLCPD is thankful that the media have been helpful in filling the information gap by airing the positions and views from both sides.

Like you, we believe that the time is ripe for an intelligent debate on these issues. The people deserve to know the truth and their rights.

—REP. NEREUS O. ACOSTA,
First District of Bukidnon,
co-chair for the
House of Representatives
Philippine Legislators'
Committee on Population and
Development Foundation Inc.,
Rm. 611 North Wing,
House of Representatives,
Quezon City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Too arrogant public servants

WHILE our legislators' appetite for "pork" is never-ending and insatiable, their performance as public servants is dismal and pathetic. Moreover, these people speak with arrogance and strut like peacocks in and outside of Congress, making pronouncements as though they are infallible.

When their legislators face conviction in the courts or are ethically questioned in Congress for conduct unbecoming to legislators, they raise a howl while extolling their accused colleagues as persons with lily-white virtues.

And even as they are wont to assail a court's decision relative to their colleagues, they insist that, being a a co-equal body, the acts of Congress should not be inquired into by the courts, invoking the constitutional principle of separation of powers.

Filipinos should remind Congress that it must perform well and wisely. Congress should not be allowed to flout the laws with impunity, such as in the case of Rep. Rodolfo G. Valencia and Alfonso Umali Jr., where the Sandiganbayan has ordered their suspension pending trial of a criminal case against them for graft and corruption.

Such flouting of laws justifies calls for the abolition of the House of Representatives.

—ARTEMIO JOSE REYES,
Mandaluyong City

DSWD's side omitted?

THIS is a reaction to the news article, titled "Barbers accused of diverting relief goods," written by Fe B. Zamora. (PDI, 3/11/05)

The statements attributed to DSWD Caraga Director Araceli Solamillo is not in the initial G-Watch report submitted to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Moreover, G-Watch has not submitted to the DSWD any detailed report on its findings relative to the relief goods that were linked to the former senator.

In the interest of justice and fair reporting, the reporter should have first conducted an exhaustive investigation before submitting her story for publication. Also, the report would have been balanced had the INQUIRER included the action taken by the DSWD, assuming the reports were true.

The DSWD has endeavored through the years to keep its operations graft-free, in fairness to the poor it seeks to serve. We believe it deserves to be also fairly treated by the media.

—CORAZON
JULIANO-SOLIMAN,
secretary,
Department of Social Welfare
and Development,
Batasan Pambansa Complex,
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

THE ARTICLE was based on documents from the DSWD Field Office 13 in the Caraga Region, and interviews with G-Watch in Manila. The statements attributed to DSWD Caraga Director Araceli Solamillo were taken from the fact sheet prepared by G-Watch on the said case.

—FE B. ZAMORA,
PDI reporter

Poetic justice

THIS is a reaction to the editorial "Election and destiny." (PDI, 4/1/05)

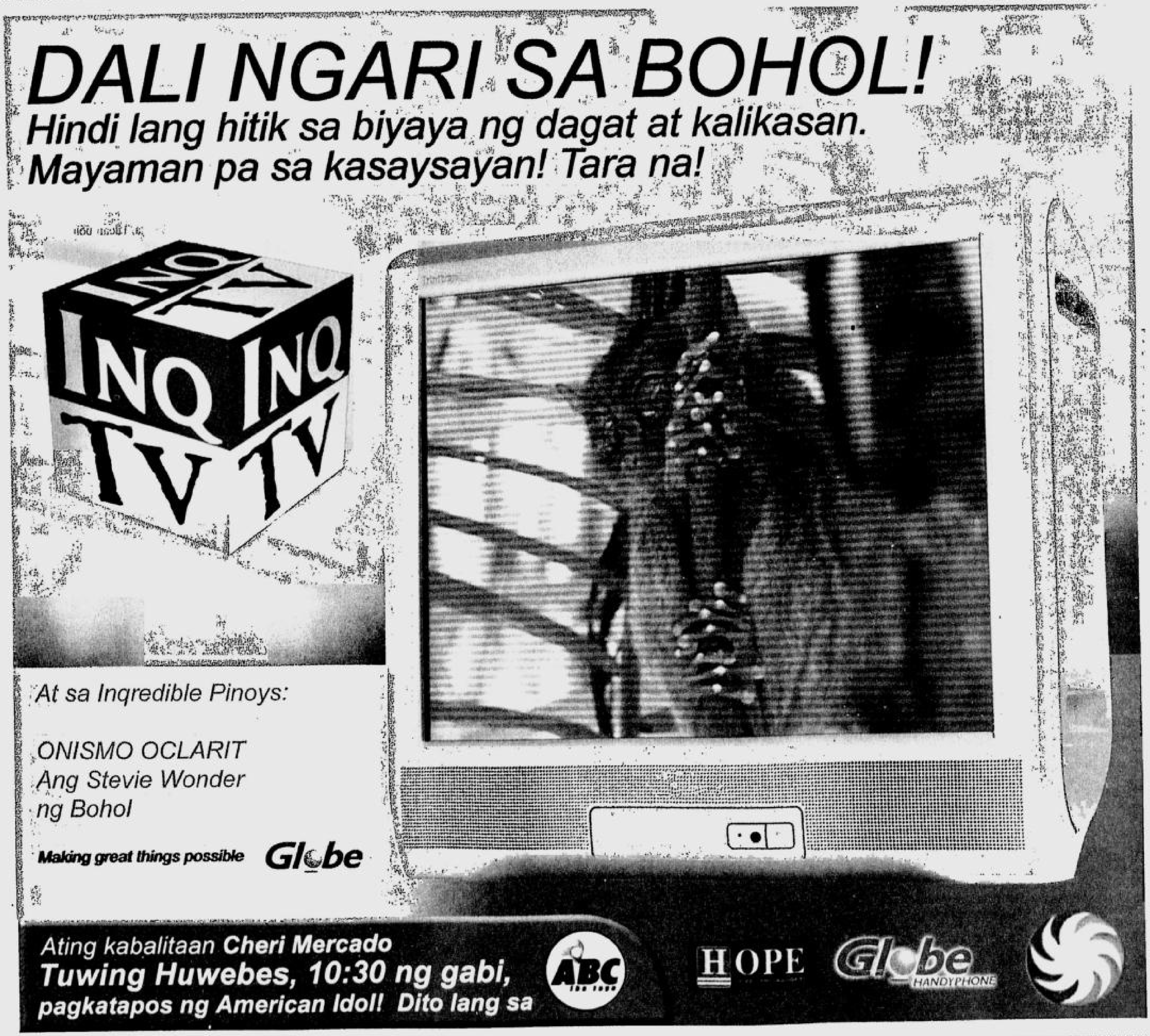
The Supreme Court decision on the election protest initiated by presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. is legally correct, but it does not help one bit in putting to rest the doubts on the legitimacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo's "full-term presidency," no matter the poetry.

Rightly or wrongly, the decision validates the impression that where Supreme Court justices' patron is affected they bend accordingly; after all, activism and conservatism are but labels by which to hide the real intentions of the heart.

Truth? Apply the same criteria used in the case of the second envelope on Joseph Estrada's impeachment trial, then write about "democratic sportsmanship" and "legal correctness"; see how they fit. But I would like to see GMA stay longer in Malacañang.

We need her there as a living, breathing reminder of a colossal folly, a grating embarrassment that mocks the do-gooders who helped put her there against all rules of the game, so that they may learn the lesson: the road to hell is paved with good intentions. That is poetic justice enough.

—ERIC MALUBAY,
Laoag City,
erikmlby@yahoo.com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Bayan Muna office bombed; 1 hurt

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—One person was injured when five bombs were lobbed at the Bayan Muna office in Barangay Kawayan, Catarman, Northern Samar shortly after midnight yesterday by still unidentified men.

The victim, Oscar Turla Jr., a Bayan Muna member from Catarman, suffered first-degree burns in the face. He was brought to the Catarman District Hospital.

Nestor Nirza, regional information officer of Bayan Muna, said his group believed that the attack on the group's office was another "harassment instigated by the military against our organization."

Bayan Muna officials in the region also cried harassment when an armored personnel carrier was parked for several hours in front of the Bayan Muna office in Catarman on March 6.

Nirza said four of the bombs, made of kerosene-filled bottles, failed to explode. One landed in the office near the window where Turla was sleeping.

He said there were about 18 persons inside the Bayan Muna office at the time attending a leadership training seminar on Tuesday. Except for Turla, no other person was hurt.

Nirza said they later found shoe prints from combat shoes near the area where the bombs were lobbed.

Col. Manuelito Uzi, commanding officer of the 63rd Infantry Battalion based in Catubig, Northern Samar, denied military involvement in the attack.

"We do not use improvised or incendiary bomb. We use hand grenade," Uzi said.

In Baguio City, members of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance have accused the military of harassing them while they were preparing for the Cordillera Day in Malibcong, Abra.

Windel Bolinget, CPA secretary general, said soldiers accosted them and started interrogating and threatening their members.

He said the soldiers were asking them if members of the party-list groups Bayan Muna or Gabriela, which the military identified in a CD they have circulated in Manila as among the "enemies" of the state, were attending the Cordillera Day celebration on April 24. The celebration is held to honor the martyrdom of Kalinga chieftain Macli-ing Dulag, who was killed by soldiers in 1980 for leading the opposition to the Chico Dam in Kalinga.

Bayan Muna and Gabriela were earlier identified by the military as front organizations of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Bolinget said soldiers belonging to the Army's 41st Infantry Battalion confronted leaders and volunteers of the CPA and the Takderan, Aywanan Daga, Ekolohiya, Kultura (Tadek) at Barangay Bangilo in Malibcong on April 1 while they were discussing the construction of a water system for the activities of Cordillera Day.

Bolinget said the soldiers, led by 2nd Lt. Jojo Trovillo, ordered him to "gather my troop."

"I told [Trovillo] right away that I did not have a troop, but I have a legitimate organization. I thought then that this officer was suspecting us to be members of the NPA [so] he approached us that way," said Bolinget.

But Lt. Col. Angelito de Leon, commander of 41st IB, said the soldiers did not harass the group.

"Our operation was part of [our] internal security [preparations]. We wanted to protect them. We know the CPA to be a legitimate organization," De Leon said. *With a report from Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

OLD MAN AND THE SEA JAY DIRECTO/AFP
Eighty-three-year-old fisherman Juan Blanca III holds a bamboo pole to support himself as he scans the churning sea on the shore of Basco, the capital of Batanes. (*Related story and photo on p. 16*)

DENR allows quarry resumption

LUCENA CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has allowed the resumption of quarrying, crushing/processing and lime plants operation in Quezon province.

In a statement posted in the DENR website, Anselmo Abungan, director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Southern Tagalog, said he had issued resumption orders to quarry operators following the selective lifting order on qualified quarry operations in the province recently issued by Environment Secretary Michael Defensor.

Abungan said 17 quarries, 11 crushing/processing plants and three lime plants in Tiaong, Sariaya and Dolores towns had all been allowed to resume operations.

Quarry operators here supply the need for construction aggregates in the Calabarzon Region.

In the aftermath of the killer floods and landslides in northern Quezon, all quarry operations in the province, especially along the slopes of Mt. Banahaw, were suspended.

However, Abungan stressed that only quarry operators, crushing/processing and lime plants without notice of violation and infractions on their permits and environmental compliance certificates, except those located within the flood plains of Mt. Banahaw, are being allowed back in business. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Man hacks dead sons, claims insanity

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A 35-year-old man hacked to death his two sons, aged 5 and 9, and tried to hide the crime by attempting to burn their house at around 4 a.m. yesterday in Sitio San Antonio, Barangay Jubay, Liloan, around 18 km north of here.

The suspect, Reynoben Sabido, 35, a former jeepney driver, was arrested but claimed he was "out of his mind" when he killed his two sons.

Sabido had been depressed since his live-in partner, Mylene Impas, left him and their children in October last year, according to Maylene's mother, Marcelina Impas.

One of the slain children, Rey Luksun, had just celebrated his ninth birthday on Tuesday, or just hours after he and his brother Risen, 5, were killed.

Marcelina said their youngest brother, Raem, 3, was spared because he was living with her in the neighboring barangay of San Vicente, also in Liloan.

Marcelina said Raem might have been killed as well had she given in to Sabido's request to bring the child to him for Rey Luksun's birthday celebration.

Sabido was arrested by barangay officials in Estaca, Compostela at 8 a.m. yesterday. He claimed he did not know what he had done.

PO3 Marcelino Sevilla, Liloan police investigator, said Rey suffered at least four hack wounds in the head and hands, while Risen suffered three wounds in the face, nose and mouth.

ROUNDUP

5 soldiers wounded

BUTUAN CITY—At least five Army soldiers were wounded in a clash with New People's Army rebels in San Agustin, Surigao del Sur on Sunday morning. A police report said two platoons of the Army's elite Deep Recon Company were on foot patrol in the village of Buhisan when they chanced upon about 30 rebels, triggering a 30-minute gunfight. There was no reported casualty on the rebel side. *Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Village exec slain

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A village chief and two others were shot and killed in a sugarcane plantation in Piat, Cagayan on Sunday. Police said at least five men waylaid Warat village chief Dominador Miguel, 38, his wife Gloria, 37, and sister-in-law Irene Corpuz, 33, in Sitio Cabaungan. Senior Supt. James Andres Melad, Cagayan police director, said the police found the victims' bodies about 40 meters from where their motorcycle was found. The bodies bore bullet wounds from an M-16 rifle and a shotgun. Melad said they were looking at land dispute as a motive in the killing. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cop, woman killed

CAMP DANGWA, Benguet—A policeman and a woman were shot and killed by a barangay official in Lubuagan, Kalinga, on April 1, reports here said. PO1 Victor Tallog, 32, was walking in Barangay Mabilong in Lubuagan when he was shot allegedly by Gilbes Busal, the barangay captain of Mabilong, reports said. After he ran out of bullets for his .45 cal. pistol, Busal went to his house, took his M-16 Armalite and again shot Tallog. When she heard the gunshots, Erlinda Bungat, a resident, went out of her house but Busal shot her. Bungat died while being taken to the provincial hospital in Tabuk town. Busal fled. Investigators said the attack was caused by a grudge between the Tallog and Busal families. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Computer arcades banned

CITY OF CALAPAN—City officials have recommended action on the Makizone and Circuit City computer centers, both allegedly operating within the prohibited radius of 100 meters from schools or churches and not displaying their mayor's permits, as provided for in a city ordinance. The recommendation was made by Redentor Reyes Jr., city engineer, and Ramon Bartolabac Jr., zoning officer, who inspected these video centers on March 15 after the Pastoral Care Council expressed concern on the negative effects of video games on the youth. Students had reportedly been seen playing computer games in these centers. *Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Camarines Sur drivers to join national strike

NAGA CITY—Transportation groups in Camarines Sur province announced yesterday their participation in the one-day nationwide transport strike on Monday in protest of the continuing oil price increases.

Rafael Duque, president of the Camarines Sur Federation of Transport Operators/Drivers Association and Cooperatives (Cam. Sur Fetrodaco) Inc., said the transport organizations from the four districts of this province have once again been convinced to join, after almost three years of not joining nationally coordinated transport strikes.

Duque said transport workers—representing pedicab, jeepney and bus drivers from all over Camarines Sur—saw the effects of the continuing oil price increases and the inaction of the Arroyo administration as reasons to join the strike.

"We cannot just sit down when Malacañang only answers our predicament with calming words while almost endorsing the unstoppable oil price increase to reach P55 a liter," he said.

The members of the Camarines Sur Fetrodaco signed a manifesto that calls for a halt to oil price increases and a rollback of fuel prices, scrapping of the oil deregulation law, government takeover of the Petron and reactivation of the Oil Price Stabilization Fund.

The transport strike will also be joined by militant organizations here led by party-list Bayan Muna, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Bicolano, Camarines Sur People's Organization and Karapatan.

Jariz Vida, Bayan Muna secretary general, said their participation in the transport strike would bring out the social and economic dimensions of the continuing price increases, which the group said as a result of the US consolidation of its grip on the oil cartel after the invasion of Iraq.

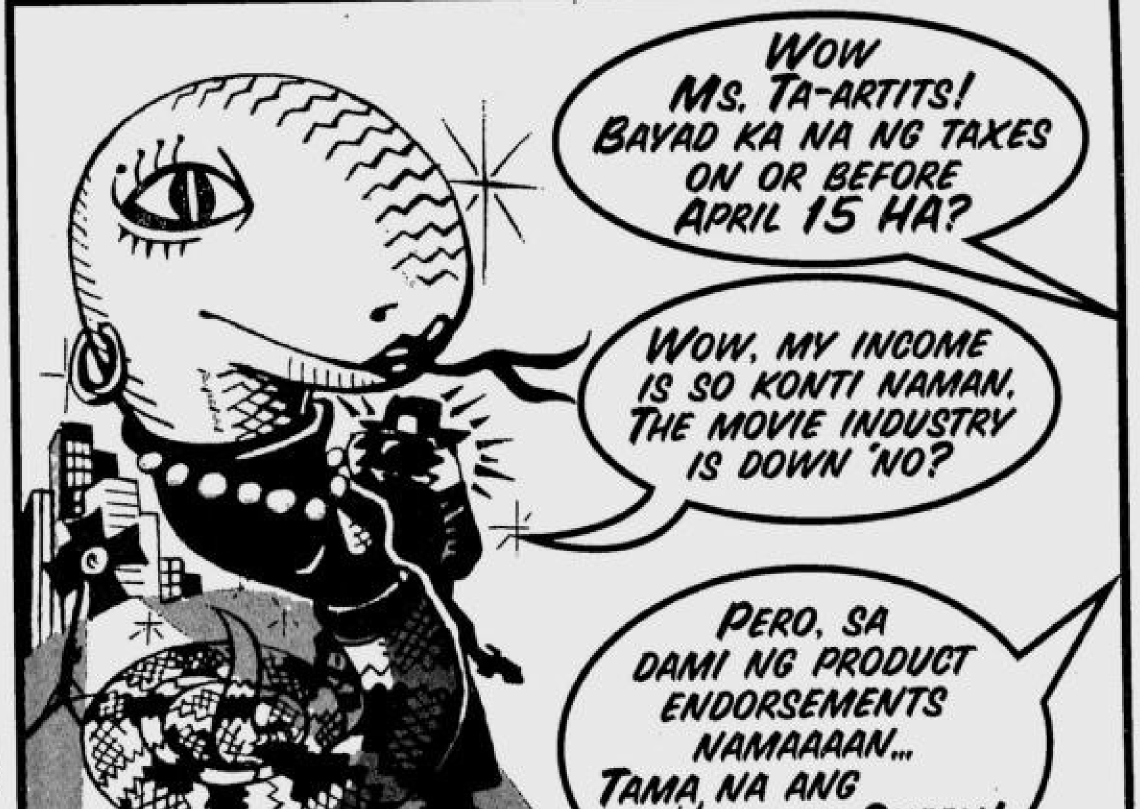
Vida said the militant groups would mobilize at least 1,000 participants from their urban and rural chapters in Camarines Sur, which will conduct a march-rally in Naga City.

But Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo was not perturbed by the threat of a total transportation paralysis because, he said, the city government was ready to face the challenge.

"We already knew that they will join the nationwide transport strike because I have approved their permit. I think they can only paralyze the public transportation routes," Robredo said.

The mayor said all available vehicles of the city government and the barangays would be used to transport passengers within the Naga City area to bring them to their destinations. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Isuplong ang
TAKAS TAX
GANG


WOW MS. TA-ARTITS! BAYAD KA NA NG TAXES ON OR BEFORE APRIL 15 HA?
WOW, MY INCOME IS SO KONTI NAMAN, THE MOVIE INDUSTRY IS DOWN 'NO?
PERO, SA DAMI NG PRODUCT ENDORSEMENTS NAMAAAAN... TAMA NA ANG DENIAL QUEEN!

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Hanggang **P1,000,000** ang pabuya sa makapagbibigay ng impormasyon na magiging sanhi ng pagkolekta ng buwis na nawala dahil sa tax evasion.* Confidential ang impormasyon at pagkakakilanlan ng mga tatawag.

PAY YOUR TAXES ON OR BEFORE APRIL 15, 2005

Operation R.A.T.E.
(Run After Tax Evaders)

*Batay sa umiiral na batas at regulasyon sa pabuya.

'Jueteng' turf war rages in Pampanga

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Former *jueteng* operator Melcher "Ngongo" Caluag on Wednesday expressed fear for his life, saying he believed he was the target of the ambush that seriously wounded his driver here on Wednesday.

Danilo Calalang was on the stairs leading to the door of the United Coconut Planters Bank in Barangay San Agustin here when three men, each riding a moppet, opened fire at past 10 a.m., police said.

Calalang was hit in the left chin, left leg and left shoulder. The police reported recovering six empty shells of .45 cal. pistols from the scene.

On Tuesday evening, Caluag reported escaping an assassination try at the Clark Special Economic Zone.

He survived an ambush on Sept. 15, 2002, also here by a lone gunman.

Asked who might be after his life, Caluag said he suspected the camp of suspected *jueteng* lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda who reportedly has reclaimed the local *jueteng* territories from Caluag since after the May 2004 elections.

Reached by phone, Lubao Mayor Dennis Pineda said the accusation against his father was unfounded.

Caluag, now barangay captain of Dolores, the commercial center of this Pampanga capital, denied that a new *jueteng* war was the root of a seething dispute.

"I have left the trade long ago. I'm engaged in the distribution of grocery items. I've been leading a quiet life," he told the INQUIRER.

He also lamented that Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, Pampanga police director, had not provided him at least two security escorts. He said this was despite the approval of Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, Central Luzon police director.

Caluag, a former *rebisador* (number reviewer) of Pineda, forayed briefly into the illegal numbers game when Pineda left for the United States as the "Jueteng-gate" scandal began to rock the Estrada administration in 2000.

Caluag was among nine financiers and operators arrested in Central Luzon from January to November 2001. He had been out on bail since.

A list released by the regional police for the period July 12 to Nov. 23, 2003 showed that Caluag was among the 15 financiers and operators of *jueteng* for that period.

He was again listed among 19 *jueteng* financiers and operators active in 2003 in Pampanga, Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Zambales, Bataan and the cities of Angeles and Olongapo. Pineda and his brother Ruben were also on this list.

In December 2003, during the supposed anti-jueteng campaign of former PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Central Luzon was declared "jueteng-free."

In Pampanga, Catholic priests were asked to endorse the status. In reality, however, *jueteng* continued and became more rampant than it was during the Estrada administration.

Even former PNP Director General Edgardo Aglipay did not succeed in eradicating *jueteng* in Central Luzon, the home region of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

This was despite 603 raids throughout 2004, the arrest of 5,765 collectors and the filing of at least 393 cases for illegal gambling.

But the police made fewer raids in 2004. In 2003, the raids totaled 1,046 or 40 percent higher than those conducted in 2004.

Jueteng was rampant in Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Tarlac City in 2004, a police report showed.

"If *jueteng* remains rampant in the country, it only indicates that our government authorities are helpless about it. We do admit that it corrupts the moral fiber of our society as other forms of gambling do," Archbishop Paciano Aniceto of the archdiocese of San Fernando in Pampanga, said in a statement in December last year.

According to reports, Pineda has returned with a vengeance, reclaiming his lost areas.

EXPERT craftsman Cornelio Aumentado works on a traditional fishing boat called *fallowa* in a remote coastal village in Batanes. Aumentado, 63, has been building *fallowas* and the smaller *tataya*, traditional fishing boats whose history dates back to the 16th century. JAY DIRECTO/AFP

Ancient art of boat-building survives in Batanes

By Jason Gutierrez
Agence France-Presse

MAHATAO—Sweat trickles down the back of Florentino Gallana as he applies the finishing touches to an eight-meter long fishing boat designed to dance with the churning waves of the Pacific and the South China Sea.

Gallana is among only a handful of expert craftsmen left in the extreme northern Philippine island of Batanes who build *tatayas* and *fallowas*, tub-shaped vessels used by the local Ivatan tribe to go fishing.

The boats are built from a local tree called Palomaria, whose whorled fibers ensure no seepage and whose durability is tested.

There are no specific measurements, and the boats are built depending on the amount of resources available or when a tree is mature enough for cutting down.

It is a tradition passed on from one generation to another, from father to son as early as the 16th or 17th centuries, when the first historical accounts about Batanes were written, according to experts at the National Museum in Manila.

The boats typically last for 20 years, and during that span, new trees would have matured to replace those that were used previously, locals said.

The museum has been commissioned by the Philippine government to include it in a study of ancient boat-making practices in the Philippines. The paper is to be finished within the year, according to officials.

Instinct

"We measure by instinct. When you ask old people here how the *tatayas* are built, they will scoff at you and say, 'how do fish swim?'," Gallana says.

"Look at the boat, it looks like a fish with a wide head and narrow tail," he says. "That is natural and it takes a lot to sink it."

Batanes is the Philippines' farthest and tiniest northern island province, and is closer to Taiwan than the main island of Luzon. It is separated only by the Bashi Channel from Taiwan and is bound to the west by the South China Sea and to the east by the Pacific Ocean.

The Pacific's strong current smashes directly with that of the South China Sea, resulting in all-year-round rough waters surrounding Batanes, a virtually untouched island province consisting of three rugged but scenic volcanic islands.

Mahatao is one of six remote coastal towns in the province, which is being promoted for inclusion in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) list of "world heritage" sites.

The local Ivatan natives are believed to have descended from ancient inhabitants of Taiwan, who dispersed in Asia and the Pacific some 3,500 years ago, according to historians.

The *fallowas* and the *tatayas* bear resemblance to those made by inhabitants of Orchid Island near Taiwan and even the dialects are similar.

"My father taught me to make boats, and now I am teaching my nephews. There are only a handful of us here in Mahatao," says Gallana 56, who says he regrets not having married or bearing any children to pass on the practice.

The boats are typically finished in two to three months, using machetes and a local carving adz, called *kawal*, to shape the tree trunk into planks.

No nails

Wooden pegs are used instead of nails, and *tatayas* are considered an extension of a fisherman's home.

The craftsmen first build the boat's hull or shell, before attaching the skeleton or frame. This method is called "shell-first construction"—the most ancient form of boat-making in the archipelago, experts say.

"This is our way of life. This boat is an extension of the fisherman and you can only venture out to sea alone in the *tataya*," Gallana says.

The bigger *fallowas*, however, are used to sail in the deep, and are used to catch groupers and dorados that are salted and dried here.

Gallana recalls that 30 years ago, one fishermen aboard a *tataya* was swept by high waves to Taiwan. He survived and the boat was intact and they were later flown back to Batanes.

"They don't sink even in churning waters. They are built to dance with the waves," says Rey Santiago, a senior researcher at the National Museum's archeology department who is studying ancient boating practices.

Some locals once tried a catamaran-type boat with outriggers, only to be thrown back to the shore by a huge wave that broke the vessel in two.

A *tataya* or a *fallowa* will not break, because its wide front will glide above the wave, and the fishermen roll with the water as they drop their line to trawl.

Boat-making was likely brought to the islands during the Neolithic period by Austronesians from ancient Taiwan who migrated to Pacific countries, Santiago says.

Austronesians were coastal-dwelling people in the Asia Pacific during that period. The *tataya* boat-making craft in the present most likely evolved from hollowing out tree trunks.

"We still don't know the exact origin of this design. But we suspect the first boat makers here were Austronesians. It is possible that came here from Taiwan by ancient boats as well," Santiago says.

The reason the practice still exists is because Ivatans also practice sustainable fishing. They sell some to nearby communities, but preserve most of the catch ahead of the long stormy season.

"They always work in harmony with nature. The size of the boat would depend on the availability of resources," says Maharlika Cuevas, also a National Museum field researcher.

But Batanes' fast-rising reputation as a new eco-tourism spot for adventure tourists could endanger the craft and make fishing here unsustainable. Some entrepreneurs may also try to commercialize the practice and lead to destruction of forests, Cuevas says.

Isuplong ang
TAKAS TAX
GANG

DOC, TAMA NA YANG WALANG RESIBO. MAGBAYAD KA NA NG TAX.
HU! MAWAWALA LANG NAMAN YAN SA KURAKOT EH!
BAKIT, PINANGGAWA MO BA NG KALSADA YUNG TAXES NA TINAGO MO?

Ang tax evader, magnanakaw.
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Hanggang **P1,000,000** ang pabuya sa makapagbibigay ng impormasyon na magiging sanhi ng pagkolekta ng buwis na nawala dahil sa tax evasion.* Confidential ang impormasyon at pagkakakilanlan ng mga tatawag.

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Operation R.A.T.E.
(Run After Tax Evaders)

*Batay sa umiiral na batas at regulasyon sa pabuya.

South Leyte gov't severs ties with Red Cross over graft raps

By Jani Arnaiz
PDI Visayas Bureau

MAASIN CITY—The Southern Leyte provincial government has severed its ties with the Philippine National Red Cross following the "unwarranted" suspension of the chapter administrator over alleged irregularities in the Red Cross-funded housing project for victims of the December 2003 killer landslides on Panaon Island.

Gov. Rosette Lerias was enraged by the allegations raised against Eric Macabuhay, the suspended PNRC chapter administrator, as she heads Oplan Bagong Panaon (OBP), a task force created for the rehabilitation of victims of the killer landslide, which was actively involved in the housing project.

The OBP said Macabuhay's suspension was "also an attack on the integrity of Red Cross directors and the members of the OBP, which is composed of the province's department heads, Red Cross and all national line agencies.

"It's very disappointing to say the least," said Lerias. "If there is any transparent project in the province this [OBP] is the most transparent. All sectors were represented including the media," the governor said.

"We have been helping them with our equipment, manpower . . . yet they have the temerity to brand us as corrupt," Lerias fumed.

Lerias said she would not attend the turnover ceremony of the P13-million housing project funded by the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) for the victims of the landslide in Barangay Pinut-an, San Ricardo in Panaon Island.

Sen. Richard Gordon, who chairs PNRC, was scheduled to turn over the 140 units to the beneficiaries on April 15.

The Red Cross' Special Disciplinary Tribunal in Manila headed by RC governor Mario Nery suspended Macabuhay indefinitely effective March 28 over alleged gross neglect of duty and for receiving gratuity.

The order, also signed by RC governor Leonor Ines Luciano, stated that Macabuhay "failed to exercise sufficient control and supervision over [the housing] project in a manner that would ensure its completion in the timetable agreed upon, and for unauthorized alteration of project specifications stipulated in purchase orders."

Macabuhay was also accused of having "directly or indirectly accepted a portion of P5,000 from a supplier for personal benefit."

The suspension order, dated March 20, came a week after all the 140 units were declared finished and the units were already raffled off by Cathy Martin, PNRC's director for Human Resources and Administration.

Macabuhay denied the charges saying the project was completed a week before the IFRC deadline on March 31.

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Bandayrel
Bu olmirano

Pope's visit, martial law reign recalled

By Jed Ll. Bacason and Leo Martin Ganace
Legazpi City

THE LIGHT drizzle stopped before the plane bringing Pope John Paul II to Legazpi City began to touch down at the airport. A bright rainbow appeared over the horizon—a sign of things to come.

POPE John Paul II waves to the crowd during his visit to Legazpi City in 1981.

Msgr. Honesto "Ham" Moraleda, 70, was recounting the day the Pontiff visited the city and celebrated Mass before some 50,000 people in February 1981.

"I hardly said a word. I was so touched by his presence, and so were the people," he said, describing the overwhelming surge of emotions that greeted the Holy Father.

Moraleda was head of the committee that oversaw the preparations for the papal visit. Twenty-four years later, he still has a clear picture of events that transpired during the three-hour papal visit.

"The Pope's plane arrived at around 8 a.m. The welcoming party, together with then First Lady Imelda Marcos, was already waiting at the tarmac. The motorcade followed, carrying the Pope around town. He held a two-hour Mass and at around 11 a.m., he returned to the airport for his next stop," Moraleda recalled, constantly glancing at a photograph of him and the Pope taken during his visit to Vatican City in 1999.

Preparations

Weeks earlier, Moraleda and his assistants were in the thick of preparations. "We had prepared an emergency ambulance for the Pope, a portable comfort room placed behind the stage where he held Mass, blood with the Pope's blood type, snacks and condiments. But the Pope never used any of these," he said.

The committee beefed up security provided by the police. Moraleda said the authorities were cautious of the activist priests who might ruin the occasion by holding rallies to denounce the Marcos regime.

The preparations, Moraleda said, were not without the intervention of the military.

"The bishop of Legazpi during the martial law period, Teotimo Pacis, was very critical of the government, so the clergy here was always under military scrutiny. The preparations for the papal visit were under the watchful eyes of the military," he said.

Among the matters questioned was the theme of the visit: "Pope John Paul II, Give Us Reason to Hope."

Moraleda recalled that a high-ranking military official paid them a visit and demanded an explanation for the "suggestive" theme.

"I [told] him that this [was] what the clergy had decided on. It cannot be changed," he said.

Even the car to be used to carry the Pope around town was also questioned, he said.

"The night before the Holy Father's arrival, a general came and demanded the car and its driver be changed. They wanted a military vehicle to carry the Pope and military personnel to drive it and to let Imelda ride with the Pope in it. We vehemently said no," he said.

THE PONTIFF officiates Mass on a specially designed stage outside the St. Gregory the Great Cathedral.

The committee rejected all the demands of the military and pushed through with their plans.

Moraleda also noted that Imelda Marcos had her own motorcade around town about 30 minutes before the Pope's arrival, after her request to be included in the Pope's motorcade was rejected.

Special Mass

More people attended the Mass that followed at a specially made bamboo stage fashioned like a *salakot* (wide-brimmed native hat) in the façade of the St. Gregory the Great Cathedral.

Moraleda recalled that the crowd spread to as far as St. Agnes' Academy, about a kilometer from the stage.

Some climbed on trees for a better view of the Pope. Those who were too far to hear the speakers brought along transistor radio sets tuned in to stations relaying the progress of the Mass.

"All the bishops from the different provinces in Bicol were present and there were even minority groups, like the Agtas of Iriga. He was very much loved by the Bicolanos," he recalled.

Although they had prepared a theme for the Mass, the Pope's message was about dignity of labor, which was specially addressed to the farmers who were present.

As Moraleda said, the Pope reached out more to the poor and the needy than to the dignitaries. Several tried to touch his hand but were blocked by security forces encircling the Pope.

"So many of our grandmothers and forefathers had always dreamed of touching the Holy Father or at least have a glimpse of him," Moraleda said.

Tireless pope

Pope John Paul II hardly took a breather while in the city. After his motorcade, he immediately officiated the Mass and left before lunch. The next destination was Iloilo, Moraleda recalled.

Despite the strenuous schedule, the Pope never showed signs of fatigue or discomfort.

"We were wondering where the Holy Father got his strength. He never touched the food we prepared for him. He never even used the comfort room we provided. He just kept on going and going," Moraleda said.

The Pope was 60 years old then. He was the second Pope to visit the diocese after Paul VI.

Moraleda himself tried to engage in a conversation with the Pope, but he only had the chance when the Pope was leaving.

After the Mass, he accompanied the bishop and other officials in sending him off at the airport. It was there, he said, that his most beautiful encounter with the Pope happened.

"Just before boarding the plane, he blessed us, gave us a hug and finally said goodbye," he said.

In 1999, Moraleda had the chance to meet the Pope again in Rome, and has since cherished a photograph of him and the Pontiff taken at the Vatican.

On the Pope's death, Moraleda reflected: "He had achieved so many and had suffered a lot, but I believe he had become greater in his death because of his deeds."

Youth encounters still fresh among former delegates

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo, Michael Jaucian and Romulo O. Ponte

IT TOOK people in Albay five days to prepare the altar in the St. Gregory the Great Cathedral in Legazpi City for Pope John Paul II's Mass on Feb. 21, 1981.

The altar and the red carpet were made entirely of abaca, while a special rattan chair awaited the Pontiff.

Excitement pervaded the city as no one expected that the Pope would visit the province as part of his tour of Asia's only predominantly Catholic country, or spend more than three hours with the people, including the Mass and the interaction with the local youth.

Even the late bishop of Legazpi, Dioneda Sarte, was surprised when informed by Catholic officials in Manila and Vatican that it was the Pope's own decision to visit the city as part of his itinerary, according to Ana Marie Ongjoco, a part-time teacher and businesswoman. Until now, no one knows the Pope's reason, she said.

Then 16 years old, Ongjoco was chosen by the priests to offer yellow and white chrysanthemum flowers to the Pope.

"I had never expected that I would be representing the youth sector, much more given the chance to give the flowers and embrace him for at least five minutes," said Ongjoco, now 40 and married.

For the past 24 years, she said, she had not lost that indescribable feeling, which further strengthened her faith.

The people considered the papal visit as the most phenomenal and miraculous thing that ever happened to them, she said. She recalled how thousands cried when they saw the Pope arrive.

Ongjoco got another chance to see the Pope when she headed several students who were chosen from the Saint Agnes' Academy of Legazpi as delegates to the World Youth Day in Manila in 1995. By then, she had been working as a teacher.

World Youth Day

Ulysses Astoveza, of Pangil, Laguna, a member of the Laguna delegation, walked the entire stretch from the Philippine International Convention Center to the Luneta Grandstand with thousands of other youths and a single aim in mind: To see the Pope in the flesh.

The noontime heat was scorching and the youth caught fever as a result.

"But while in Luneta waiting for the Holy Father to pass by, a miracle happened. My fever was suddenly gone. I did not take any medicine," he claimed. "I was about 20 meters away from the Pope when he passed by our location."

Astoveza said they were pinned on their space in the jampacked park. "We just ate, prayed, slept and did personal necessities right at the spot where we were," he recalled.

Annalyn Mendoza, also from Pangil, still wondered how she survived the waiting, the chanting for the Pope, the interaction with other youths and doing virtually all activities on her spot. They were there for two days.

"At first I was excited to join the World Youth Day, not for the Pope but because I would meet many fellow youths from various countries. It was an exciting feeling to meet foreign youths like us," said Mendoza, then 17 years old and looking frail.

'Holy, gentle face'

"But all these initial excitement was set aside as I saw an ocean of people crowding and chanting, 'Viva Pope John Paul!' At this time, my excitement was focused on only one thing: to see the Pope in person," she said.

Now a high school teacher, Mendoza said she wept in deep gladness when she saw John Paul II. "I felt my heart being lifted as I saw the Pope's holy, gentle face smiling before us."

She said she witnessed how other delegates collapsed at the height of the activities.

Sharing was the order of the day, she said.

"There were those delegates who ran out of food. But fellow delegates were spontaneous in sharing their food to whoever lacked supply. We persevered even without taking our bath, no comfort rooms and other basic services. All of us stayed just to see the Pope in person," she said.

She said their hardships disappeared when the Pope appeared.

"His heart seemed to radiate with warmth as he extended his hands to us who stood by through the agonizing process, just to experience his holiness."

Isuplong ang
TAKAS TAX
GANG

ATTORNEY, BAGO NA NAMAN ANG WHEELS AH.
MALAKING KASO ANG IPINANALO KO EH!
KOTSE ANG PINAMBAYAD, PARA DI MAHAGILAP NG BIR?
ABA OO! SA MGA POLITICO LANG NAMAN MAPUPUNTA ANG PERA KO!
BAKIT, MAY MAHIRAP BANG NAKIKINABANG SA KOTSE MO?

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People want sainthood for John Paul put on fast track

VATICAN CITY—Sainthood in the Roman Catholic Church usually takes decades or even centuries to achieve. But for Pope John Paul, the popular verdict is in and many say they want him put straight on the fast track.

Church rules say the first step to sainthood, known as "opening a cause," cannot start until five years after a death.

The rule is meant, among other things, to allow emotions to settle down after a person dies and for documentation and witnesses supporting the sainthood cause to be prepared.

But many people are convinced that John Paul was a saint in his life, some comparing him to Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

"I pray the Holy Spirit will illuminate the next pope and help him to make a saint of John Paul as soon as possible," said Liliana Rosetti, 47, a Roman housewife who waited for hours to see John Paul's body. "He deserves to be made a saint tomorrow for all he did."

By some estimates, 3 million people will have seen the Pope's body in the five days before he is buried on Friday. By comparison, the shrine at Lourdes in France, where the Madonna is said to have appeared, receives 6 million pilgrims in an entire year.

Waive 5-year period

Because the Pope was bishop of Rome, the cause must be started there but the Polish church is likely to press his successor to waive the five-year waiting period.

The precedent was set by John Paul himself.

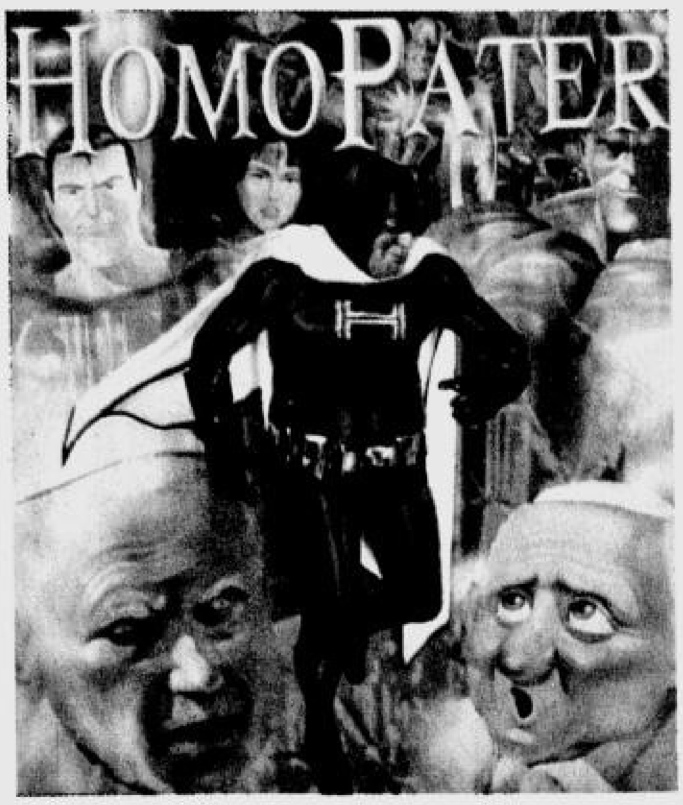
In 1999, the Pope bent Vatican rules to grant a dispensation allowing Mother Teresa's sainthood cause to be started only two years after her death in 1997.

"The Pope was truly 'a Great' ... he led the way," said Dora Rubillo, 55, from Rome. "He didn't only speak against communism but also against capitalism, the Mafia. He was John Paul the Great, some might already say Saint John Paul," she said.

The day after he died, Italy's Il Giornale newspaper seemed to encapsulate the feeling among many Catholics around the world with the headline "Our Pope who art in heaven."

Long, tedious process

Pope John Paul beatified 1,338 people and canonized 482 saints, more than all his predecessors combined since current procedures began in 1588. Now pilgrims and prelates say it is his turn.



JOHN PAUL, SUPERHERO. A Colombian artist has produced a comic book about the late Pope depicting him as a man who fights evil. REUTERS

"This Pope is on the road to sainthood. Our contact with him will be different but it is not finished," said Archbishop Jozef Michalik, head of the Polish Bishops' Conference.

The saint-making procedure is often long, bureaucratic and expensive and many Catholics say they want the red tape cut.

"For me he was another Christ. He truly lived the life of Jesus. He showed us how to live, how to suffer, how to love and even how to die," said Sister Simone from Austria, standing with fellow nuns from Mother Teresa's order to see the Pope's body.

'Servant of God'

When a sainthood cause is begun, in the Pope's case most likely by the Cardinal of Rome, the candidate gets the title "Servant of God". A "postulator" is appointed to help gather information from people who knew the candidate, seeking evidence of holiness. In this case, the postulator might be someone who worked with the Pope in the Vatican.

A "relator" is then appointed to evaluate evidence and make a recommendation in the form of a "positio", or position paper.

Many of the people who knew or worked with the Pope are still alive. This could speed up the case significantly because witnesses would be readily available to testify.

'Heroic virtues'

His sainthood process would move more quickly because it will be classified as a "recent" rather than "ancient" cause, bypassing a Vatican historical commission and moving directly to a theological commission.

If an initial investigation ends positively, John Paul's successor can issue a decree recognizing a person's "heroic virtues". The candidate then gets the title "venerable." One miracle is required after the candidate's death for the cause to move on to beatification. The miracle must be the result of prayers asking the candidate to intercede with God.

Miracles are usually a physical healing which doctors are at a loss to explain.

A person who is beatified is declared a "blessed", allowing limited veneration. Another miracle is needed between beatification and canonization, the conferring of sainthood.

One Italian paper commented on John Paul: "He has already performed a first miracle: all these people here for him." *Reuters*

'We have to learn how to dialogue with Islam'

VATICAN CITY—Four years ago, on one of Pope John Paul II's last major trips, he stood in the ancient Omayyad Mosque in Syria and appealed for Christians and Muslims to seek common ground rather than confrontation.

"May the hearts of Christians and Muslims turn to one another with feelings of brotherhood and friendship," the Pontiff—the first pope to enter a Muslim place of worship—urged at the end of his address.

The words—spoken just four months before the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks—now stand as a challenge for his successor. Just as the Cold War defined the beginning of John Paul II's 26-year papacy, the rifts between the West and Islam will likely influence how the next pope measures his priorities.

Relations with Islam is emerging as one of the factors that will shape the decision of the cardinals who gather later this month to pick the 265th pontiff.

"We have to learn to live with Islam," said Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington, speaking to reporters Tuesday in Rome. "We have to learn how to dialogue with Islam."

Chicago Cardinal Francis George added: "The history between Catholicism and Islam is not a happy one. We want to live at peace in a global society so a dialogue with Islam is particularly important."

At least two cardinals could receive extra attention at the conclave in discussions about Islam.

Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria has been based at the Vatican for decades, but spent his youth amid the country's mix of Christians and Muslims. The Vatican is also alarmed about inter-religious clashes in Nigeria that have claimed thousands of lives since the late 1990s. But Arinze would require a history-shaping act by the generally conservative College of Cardinals: naming the first African pope in modern times.

Cardinal Godfried Danneels of Belgium also is seen as having a deft diplomatic touch, but his liberal-minded views could alarm some conservative cardinals.

The concerns about Islam are particularly pressing among the 11 American cardinals who will join the conclave. Unlike Europe and elsewhere, there are few prominent Muslim leaders in the United States to conduct serious interfaith contacts. The Vatican—as both a diplomatic entity and religious power—becomes an important forum for outreach.

WHERE MOSES, according to tradition, first glimpsed the Promised Land—Mt. Nebo, west of Amman, Jordan, the most-travelled Pope visited in March, 2000. AP

The Holy See also sees more immediate worries in the rise of radical Islam.

Christians have been targeted by Muslim guerrillas in the Philippines, Iraq and elsewhere in recent years. The Vatican also has a stake in maintaining the sensitive religious balance in Jerusalem, where Christians often must tread carefully between the bigger forces of Jewish Israel and the Palestinians.

"The Christians are often between the hammer and the anvil," said Daniel Rossing, who heads a Jerusalem-based group that promotes inter-religious dialogue.

It was on full display during the late Pope's historic trip to Syria. He silently listened as Syria's President Bashar Assad denounced Jews, accusing them of trying to "kill the principles of all religions." The Vatican refused to comment on the diatribe, apparently concerned any reaction would upset years of carefully crafted relations with the Muslim world.

The difficulty for the new pope is to further cultivate rapport with Muslims in the highly charged post-Sept. 11 politics.

"The new pope will have a different task ahead," said Daniel Thompson, director of religious studies at Fordham University in New York. "Who do you talk to? Who represents the Muslim population? How do you properly engage Islam with the contemporary situation?"

The new pontiff will inherit a reservoir of good will.

John Paul II received considerable praise in the Muslim world for his calls to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and his opposition to the US-led war in Iraq.

The outpouring following his death Saturday reflected his standing.

At the line of mourners, who wanted to view the Pope's body, a small knot of Nigerian Muslims held a banner: the Islamic crescent and the Christian cross were intertwined. *AP*

Time stops in Eternal City

From page A1

selves in a brown blanket said they also waited 12 hours.

Massimo Martone, from Avellino in southern Italy, said he wished he had paid more attention to the Pope when he was alive. "Reading about him in the papers, I've been feeling so emotional," he said.

"Ciao, Papa," 3-year-old Francesco Magrin whispered as he blew a kiss, his mother Michela said.

One million people are estimated to have waited in line to see the Pope on Monday and Tuesday, the Civil Defense Department said.

About 600,000 people viewed his body Tuesday, and the same number was expected yesterday, the Civil Defense said.

The basilica was closed for cleaning from 2 a.m. to 5 a.m., which added to the wait to see the Pope, who died Saturday at age 84.

Crowds swelled Monday before John Paul II's body was carried solemnly from the Vatican's Apostolic Palace into the basilica to go on public view.

The Pope will be laid to rest Friday in the grotto of St. Peter's Basilica, alongside popes of centuries past and near the traditional tomb of the first pope, St. Peter.

Security

The requiem Mass is expected to draw millions, making it the biggest gathering seen in Rome since huge peace demonstrations in protest of the Iraq war.

Secluded from the multiplying throngs, cardinals met for a third day to finalize the funeral details and read John Paul's will.

"Sometimes I feel like I am dreaming, living in a totally unreal world," said Spanish Cardinal Carlos Amigo Vallejo as he headed to the meeting.

To protect the funeral guests, Rome is drafting in thousands of extra police, a surveillance plane, anti-aircraft missiles and a warship off the Mediterranean coast. From Thursday, no aircraft will be allowed to fly over the Italian capital.

Rome city officials were due to meet later on Wednesday to decide whether to close shops and offices and order a total traffic ban to head off transport mayhem.

To cope with the influx of pilgrims, local authorities threw up tents on the outskirts of the ancient city and opened special hostels. Many spent the night on the ground in sleeping bags.

Busloads were on their way from the Pope's native Poland. Ships and planes were bringing in many more.

"People, this is a dramatic situation," security coordinator Andrea Astolsi shouted through a microphone at the crowd outside the basilica. "This is a 14-to 15-hour wait."

Not enough air

By midmorning Wednesday, 80 people had fainted in the queues and had to be lifted over the barriers for medical treatment.

A crane unloaded cases of water from a large truck. Hundreds of pilgrims were treated for fainting and dehydration over the first two days of the Pope's lying-in-state.

A dozen mobile medical centers have been set up by the Vatican, Red Cross, Italian hospitals and volunteers working around the clock.

One rescue worker said she had pulled three people from the thirsty masses. "In the crowd there's not even enough air."

Handouts, free shuttles

Pilgrims arriving in Rome are being greeted at the central railway station with handouts of water, information on free shuttles to Vatican City, and—most precious of all—where to find free lodging.

Thousands more are expected to try to fly in, although air traffic will be severely disrupted for security reasons.

Italy's civil aviation body Enac said that it planned to divert 80 charter flights to neighboring cities from where pilgrims will be transported to Rome by bus and coach.

In Warsaw, long queues also lined up at the central railway station to buy precious tickets on chartered trains due to start the 25-hour trip to Rome late Wednesday.

"This is one of the last chances I'll see him. At the very least I wanted to say goodbye to him," said Maciej Walnik, who had waited 17 hours in line.

"If I hadn't got this, I would have regretted it for the rest of my life," he said, proudly showing Agence France-Presse his ticket.

The Italian rail network Trenitalia has laid on 43 extra trains a day, but that did not stop some 300 disgruntled pilgrims from mounting a protest after they were unable to get onto a jampacked train.

200 world leaders

The funeral will bring together nearly 200 world leaders, some of whom rarely if ever meet, a fitting tribute to a Pope who fought for world peace and unity.

CLOSEUP of rosary wrapped around the Pope's hands. He was an unabashed devotee of Mary, the mother of God. AFP

The chairs already laid out in St. Peter's Square will seat US President George W. Bush near President Mohammad Khatami of Iran, one of the countries Bush included in his "axis of evil."

Bush will be joined by former presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the White House said.

Other leaders include a clutch of European royalty, presidents from Brazil, France and the Philippines and the prime ministers of Britain and Canada.

Showing the Pope's appeal transcended boundaries, Israeli President Moshe Katsav and Palestinian Authority premier Ahmed Qorei will also come.

"He shows that one man can make an enormous difference. And I look forward to honoring the memory of Pope John Paul II," Bush said.

The Pope's death has drawn eulogies around the world for his commitment to peace, humanity and dialogue, and his contribution to the fall of communism in Poland and by extension the whole of eastern Europe.

N. Korea sends condolence

Tributes continue to pour in.

The US Senate hailed him in a resolution as "one of the greatest spiritual leaders and moral teachers of the modern era," and even Stalinist North Korea, oft-cited as one of the world's most oppressive regimes, sent its condolences to the Vatican, state media reported.

In Jordan, King Abdullah ordered flags lowered on government buildings for three days and will attend the funeral, an official said.

European Union buildings will do likewise on Friday, and in far-away Nepal, state media said the flag would fly at half-staff on government buildings and embassies abroad.

Make him a saint

Calls, meanwhile, for John Paul II to be made a saint came from Sean Brady, head of the Catholic Church in Ireland, as well as the archbishop of Spain's northern city of Burgos.

"My hope is that he would be canonized," Brady said after a memorial Mass. "If it would serve people to take on board and live out the kind of things he believed in, and taught and stood for, I think it would be important."

For all the emotional outpouring in Rome, many criticize the late Pope for his intransigent stance on issues from celibacy to contraception, from homosexuality to women's role in the Church.

"The next pope should be someone who understands the reality of the developing world," said Nadira Omarjee, a researcher at South Africa-based People Opposing Women Abuse.

But Cardinal Wilfrid Napier of South Africa stood by the Pope. "Is not the spread of AIDS due to irresponsible sexual behavior rather than because people are told not to use condoms or are told to use condoms?" he said. *Reports from Reuters, AFP and AP*

Mandaluyong fugitives walked under the noses of policemen

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

POLICEMEN were too busy to notice three detainees pass in front of them during the jailbreak in Mandaluyong City before dawn Monday.

Arnel Macasaet, 25, one of the escapees, surrendered Tuesday after he failed to find his wife, whom he said was his reason for bolting jail.

"My wife visited me and said that she wanted to leave me," Macasaet said when asked why he escaped.

Before 5 a.m. last Monday, Macasaet said he and two other detainees detached the plywood ceiling of their cell inside the city police headquarters and crawled out.

Once outside, he said, they casually walked through the corridor and passed by policemen who were busy attending to cases during that rainy morning.

The detention cell was behind the office of the criminal investigation unit.

Detainees who did not join the jailbreak told the INQUIRER that they were sleeping and did not notice the three leave.

Macasaet said he only wanted to see his wife and beg her not to leave him.

He went home but failed to find his wife. He then decided to go to Batangas to hide.

The other day, he decided it was time to face the law.

Macasaet surrendered through a family friend who is a member of the Mayor's Action Center.

Shortly before Tuesday midnight, his father turned Macasaet over to members of the action center, said Jasper Manapat, MAC deputy for operations.

He was presented to Mayor Neptali Gonzales and was turned over to the city police yesterday morning.

"We are conducting a thorough investigation to determine the administrative and criminal culpability, if any, of the duty policemen during the jailbreak," city police chief Senior Supt. Ericson Velasquez told reporters yesterday.

He told the INQUIRER that they already installed iron grills on the ceiling of the police headquarters detention cell to prevent another escape.

The police are also working out the surrender of Renato Barroa and Gerald Bonifacio, who remain at large after the escape.

"We are already talking with their relatives," Velasquez said.

Macasaet, Barroa and Bonifacio are facing drug-related charges. *With Rio Ribaya*

MALONZO SON APPOINTMENT

BF may be dragged into Caloocan row

PRISON LIFE REM ZAMORA

An inmate at the Medium Security Prison of the national penitentiary in Muntinlupa City makes a living by making handicrafts which are distributed to popular malls and other cottage industry stores all over the country.

By Nancy C. Carvajal

CALOOCAN City councilors opposing the appointment of a son of former Mayor Rey Malonzo to the City Council would seek the help of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando to convince the President to reconsider her decision.

"As head of Lakas-National Capital Region we would bring the case to Bayani Fernando," said Councilor Henry Cammayo.

The order for Christopher Malonzo to assume the post vacated by the death of Councilor Eduardo Rosca was signed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita last March 31.

Status questioned

In opposing the appointment of the 24-year-old Malonzo, Cammayo questioned Christopher's status in the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats party.

"We do not know him. We are not even sure if he is a party member," he added.

The nine Lakas councilors also did not like the way Malonzo endorsed his son to the council, Cammayo said.

"He never consulted us when he recommended his son to Speaker de Venecia on the day Popoy (Rosca) died," he added.

Cammayo revealed that party members would be meeting soon to expel the former mayor as head of Lakas in Caloocan City.

The councilor said that if Malonzo would insist on his son's appointment, they would seek a temporary restraining order against it.

"Historically, an immediate family (member) should take over the position left behind by the deceased," Cammayo explained.

Last month, the City Council passed a resolution recommending Kristen Joy, a daughter of Rosca, to take his place.

Sought for comment, the former mayor said his partymates were entitled to their opinion.

According to rules

"But as far as I'm concerned, my action is in accordance with the rules of the party and of the law," the older Malonzo said.

According to him, the rules allowed the party chair to recommend a replacement for a position vacated by a member.

The endorsement, he said, was approved by other party officials so the councilors should just have to abide by the decision.

"Among the party members in Caloocan City, I am the the most loyal to the party," he said.

Malonzo added that in due time, he would be filing charges against the councilors, whom he said committed dereliction of duty when they boycotted the session Tuesday after they learned that his son would be attending.

Two die in Internet shop rob

A ROBBERY gone wrong left two men dead, including one of the suspects, inside an Internet cafe last Tuesday in Quezon City.

Brian Polimar, 24, was playing a computer game at NetGuide Computer Hauz when a pair of robbers barged into the shop and declared a holdup, police said.

Brandishing a hand grenade, a .38-cal. revolver and a .45-cal. pistol, the suspects Alex Tamayo, 21, and Joseph Maningo, 30, ordered the patrons to lie on the ground as they took the shop's day earnings of about P2,000.

The suspects were about to leave when they indiscriminately opened fire, hitting Polimar, a machine operator, in the stomach.

Seeing this, Federiko Sandiko, a resident, grappled with Tamayo for the gun, while other customers subdued Maningo.

Another shot rang out and Maningo fell to the ground.

Polimar and Maningo both died in hospital, while Tamayo was turned over to the police. *DJ Yap*

Caretakers seek TRO on Arroceros Park building

By Tina G. Santos

A GROUP of environmentalists fighting for the preservation of Arroceros Park in Manila yesterday filed a complaint against Mayor Lito Atienza who is prepared to erect a building for teachers on the controversial property.

Members of the Winner Foundation, the environmental organization taking care of the park, is asking the court to issue a preliminary injunction and temporary restraining order to prevent the mayor from building the headquarters designed for teachers in the area.

The construction of any structure inside the 2.1-hectare property would mean cutting down trees and eventually destroying the natural habitat of birds and other wildlife that had sought shelter at the park, the foundation claimed in its petition filed before the Manila Regional Trial Court.

The group is also asking the court to keep Atienza from preventing the foundation from performing its duties, saying the park's gate had been padlocked "upon the mayor's order."

Winner wants the mayor to recognize and adhere to the stipulations made under the Memorandum of Agreement entered into by the City of Manila during the time of then Mayor Alfredo Lim and the foundation.

Under the MOA signed on Nov. 19, 1993, City Hall had turned over the property to Winner which developed it as a park with lush greenery and a venue for weekend painters. The foundation had a 20-year forest development plan for the park.

Atienza could not be reached for comment on this latest development.

But speaking on his behalf, city legal officer Melchor Monsod said the City Council, which the mayor had presided over when he was still vice mayor, had failed to approve the MOA , making it nonbinding.

Monsod said the MOA was signed even before the city bought the property for P65 million from the Land Bank of the Philippines.

"It is basic and fundamental that when you enter into an agreement concerning a property, it should belong to you. How can you enter into an agreement over a property which, in the first place, is not yours?" Monsod explained.

He added that the MOA was only good for one year. "It was just an act of administration on the part of the mayor then. Once it exceeds more than a year, an act of ownership is needed, and this should be ratified by the City Council," he said.

Search on for Quezon City's outstanding mothers

By DJ Yap

THE QUEZON City government is once again poised to hand out the Gawad Ulirang Ina awards to mothers who have made a difference in the home and their community.

Now on its third year, the tribute to the city's outstanding mothers is a project of the Office of the City Mayor, in cooperation with the Alay Kay Inay ng Lungsod Quezon Foundation Inc.

Whether a single mom or a full-time homemaker, any mother who is a Quezon City resident involved in community work for at least three years, and is committed to her family and community, is eligible for the prize.

The criteria are: contribution to the formation of her family members as productive citizens, involvement in the improvement of the quality of life of the community or society at large, an inspiring model to the community, and instrumental in bringing about positive change in the community.

Office of the City Mayor operations division chief Mario Maclang said it does not matter whether the nominee is a single parent or lives with her husband, as long as she performs her role as mother and community worker well.

Maclang said one of the past winners was separated from her husband, but this did not affect her duties as a mother to her children and her community work.

He said the award was conceptualized to show the city's appreciation of mothers, especially those who juggle their duties in the home and their community.

Erlinda Sapiandante of Barangay Baesa and Aurora Tabares of Barangay Dioquino Zobel won the first two Gawad Ulirang Ina, said Maclang.

Both serve the public through livelihood, health and housing projects for the poor, he added.

The city will hand out six awards—Gawad Mayor Adelina Rodriguez for District 1, Gawad Tandang Sora for District 2, Gawad Cecilia Muñoz-Palma for District 3, Gawad Betty Go-Belmonte for District 4, "Natatanging Ina ng Gabi (Glowing Mom of the Night)," and the top award, Gawad Doña Aurora Quezon 2005.

Nominees have until Friday to submit three sets of write-ups/clippings, citations and videotapes of past and present community projects, and recommendation letters from concerned groups or organizations to the Office of the Vice Mayor or barangay coordinators. The grand winner will receive P25,000, while the District 1-4 winners will take home P10,000 each.

TAXPAYERS' LOUNGE

Mandaluyong City residents and businessmen watch a feature film while waiting for their turn to pay taxes at the newly-opened Taxpayers Lounge at the City Hall complex in Maysilo Circle. Mayor Neptali Gonzales II ordered the construction of the air-conditioned lounge to provide some comfort to taxpayers settling their dues.

METROBRIEFS

SJ's pink fences

SAN JUAN engineering department personnel were on Edsa yesterday afternoon, their eyes fixed on the controversial pink fences of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA). But they did not did not dismantle the structures on the 500-meter San Juan stretch of Edsa, as promised by San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito who had been at loggerheads with the MMDA on the subject. "They just inspected the area. They also talked to some MMDA officials," an engineering department employee said. Ejercito earlier gave MMDA chair Bayani Fernando until yesterday to remove the fences built from the corner of Annapolis to the corner of Connecticut, or else his engineering team would dismantle the structures. The mayor claimed owners of establishments in the area had told him that the fences caused huge traffic jams, and was bad for business. But after a phone call from Fernando who said they had made several improvements on the fences, Ejercito said he was extending his deadline to Friday. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Educators' meet

THE COUNTRY'S top educators from public and private schools will meet April 7-8 for an assembly at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in Intramuros, Manila. Dr. Benjamin G. Tayabas, PLM president, said the purpose of the two-day assembly is to discuss concrete solutions to the problems of actual teaching and the training of teachers in the country.

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Stray dolphin saved off Manila Bay

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THIS dolphin is a survivor.

A wounded bottle-nosed dolphin lived through the night after straying from its pod into the premises of the Manila Yacht Club's (MYC) premises where it was rescued on Tuesday.

In what he described as a "rare occurrence," Manila Zoo officer-in-charge Dr. Romulo Bernardo said the pod of dolphins passed through the Manila Bay's waters the other night.

"This is the first time I heard of dolphins swimming in Manila Bay," Bernardo told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

MYC official Rudy Pederoso agreed with Bernardo, saying that bottle-nosed dolphins were often found in the waters of Mindoro and Bataan provinces.

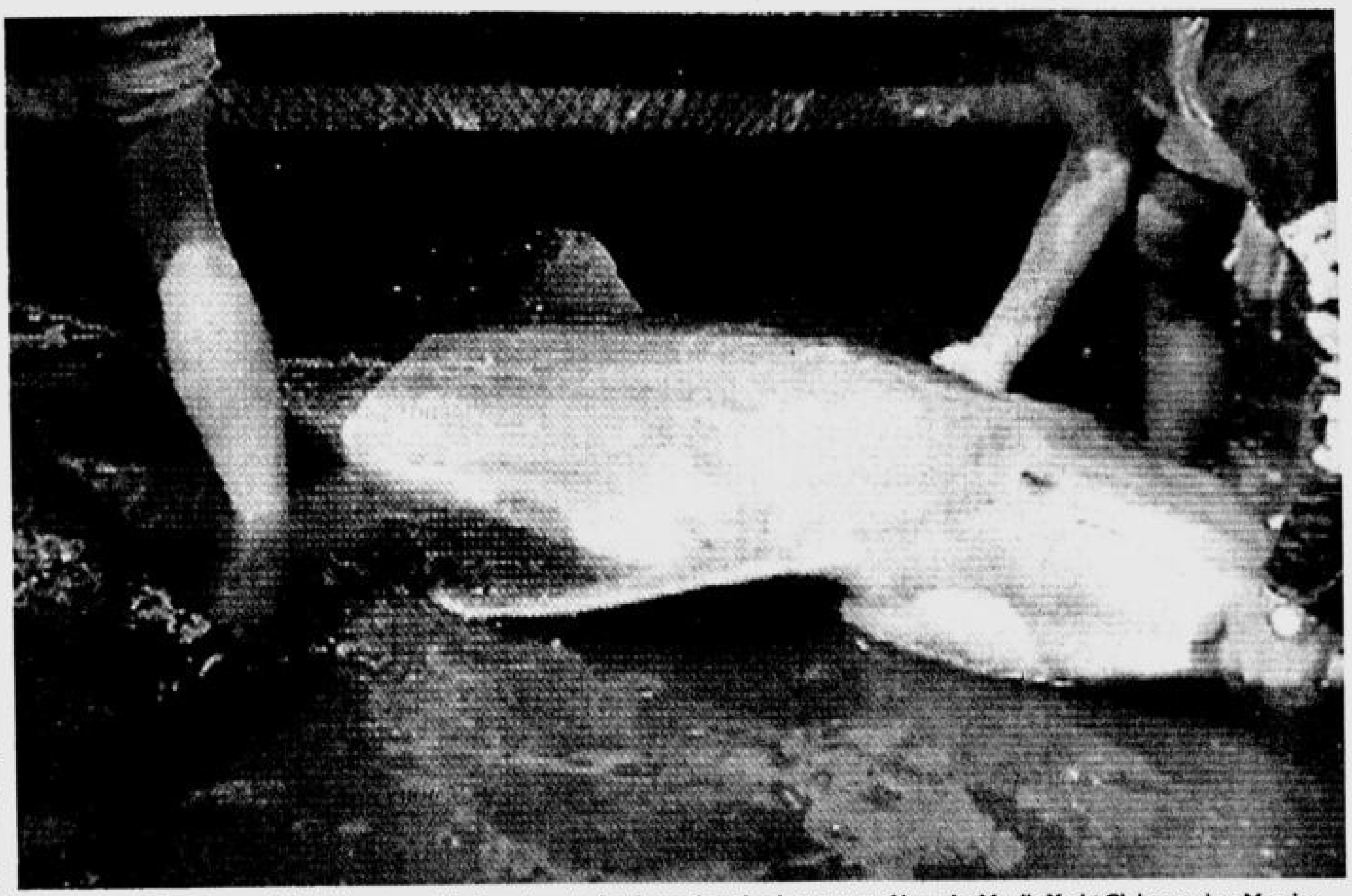
"We had no idea why these dolphins were swimming in the bay the other night," Pederoso said.

The dolphin, measuring approximately 1.8 meters, then strayed into the Philippine Navy Headquarters' area and swam toward the MYC with two other companions.

Pederoso said patrol guards saw the dolphins swimming around the area at about 9 p.m.

The dolphins, which have a habit of following boats, may have strayed from the group to follow the MYC yachts, he added.

But while the two other dolphins managed to leave the MYC premises, the male dolphin's wounds could have prevented it from following the others, the MYC official explained.



A WOUNDED bottle-nosed dolphin gets medical treatment after it was found to have strayed into the Manila Yacht Club premises Monday night. The dolphin was later returned to rejoin his companions at Manila Bay.

DENR PHOTO

"The wounded dolphin was the only one left behind in the morning," Pederoso added.

After bringing the mammal to the breakwater's sandy part at around 8:30 a.m. yesterday, veterinarians from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources immediately treated the dolphin's two wounds.

"The dolphin was friendly, and it seemed like it was asking for help," Pederoso said.

He added that the mammal's wounds, located on its tail and belly, were relatively old.

Back home

After injecting the dolphin with vitamins and observing it for a few hours, Pederoso and the other veterinarians released it back to the deep waters near the Parola area in Manila.

"The dolphin will survive," Pederoso confidently said. "It swam with renewed vigor, not like how it behaved before its wounds were treated."

According to the website eNature.com, bottle-nosed dolphins feed on a wide variety of fishes, squids, shrimps and crabs, and often follow trawlers and other fishing boats to feed on unwanted fish that are thrown overboard and on organisms stirred up by the nets.

The dolphins are particularly adept at finding prey using echolocation—projecting a sound beam and listening to the echo.

They are also known to ride the bow of boats and even surf. *With Jean Bermudez*

Oops, wrong choice

THEY should have known better.

Charges of estafa were filed against the owner of a money-changing shop in Manila for allegedly shortchanging the wife of Kenya's delegate to the ongoing Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The suspect was identified as Cristina Angeles, proprietor of Bon-Kring Money Changer located at 507 Sta. Monica St., Ermita, Manila.

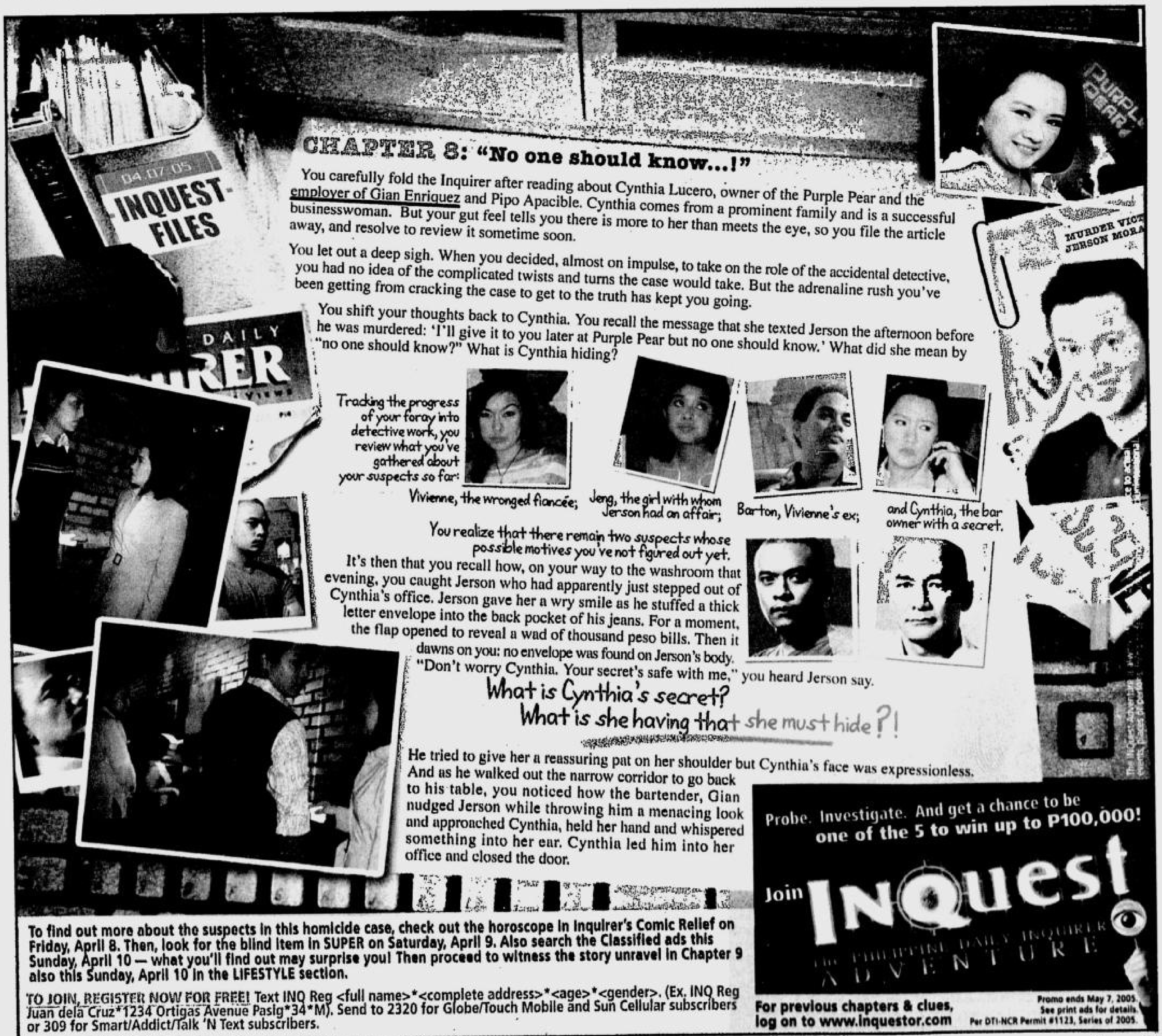
According to Senior Insp. Alberto Peco, complainant Joyce Ligale went to the suspect's money-changing shop last March 30 to change $500 into pesos.

When Ligale returned to the Diamond Hotel where she was billeted, she discovered that the teller had duped her of P13,000 by giving her a low exchange rate for the dollars.

After complaining to the authorities, members of the Western Police District picked up one of the shop's tellers, Luzviminda Repitado, the next day for questioning. But Peco said Ligale failed to identify any of the shop personnel, including Repitado.

"Sometime during the interrogation at the precinct, Repitado managed to give the P13,000 back to the victim, who then withdrew her complaint," Peco said.

But he added they would file charges against the owner of the shop who, he claimed, refused to cooperate with the authorities. The shop had ceased operating since Monday. *Margaux C. Ortiz*



CHAPTER 8: "No one should know...!"

You carefully fold the Inquirer after reading about Cynthia Lucero, owner of the Purple Pear and the employer of Gian Enriquez and Pipo Apacible. Cynthia comes from a prominent family and is a successful businesswoman. But your gut feel tells you there is more to her than meets the eye, so you file the article away, and resolve to review it sometime soon.

You let out a deep sigh. When you decided, almost on impulse, to take on the role of the accidental detective, you had no idea of the complicated twists and turns the case would take. But the adrenaline rush you've been getting from cracking the case to get to the truth has kept you going.

You shift your thoughts back to Cynthia. You recall the message that she texted Jerson the afternoon before he was murdered: 'I'll give it to you later at Purple Pear but no one should know.' What did she mean by "no one should know?" What is Cynthia hiding?

Tracking the progress of your foray into detective work, you review what you've gathered about your suspects so far:

Vivienne, the wronged fiancée; Jeng, the girl with whom Jerson had an affair; Barton, Vivienne's ex; and Cynthia, the bar owner with a secret.

You realize that there remain two suspects whose possible motives you've not figured out yet.

It's then that you recall how, on your way to the washroom that evening, you caught Jerson who had apparently just stepped out of Cynthia's office. Jerson gave her a wry smile as he stuffed a thick letter envelope into the back pocket of his jeans. For a moment, the flap opened to reveal a wad of thousand peso bills. Then it dawns on you: no envelope was found on Jerson's body.

"Don't worry Cynthia. Your secret's safe with me," you heard Jerson say.

What is Cynthia's secret?
What is she having that she must hide?!

He tried to give her a reassuring pat on her shoulder but Cynthia's face was expressionless. And as he walked out the narrow corridor to go back to his table, you noticed how the bartender, Gian nudged Jerson while throwing him a menacing look and approached Cynthia, held her hand and whispered something into her ear. Cynthia led him into her office and closed the door.

To find out more about the suspects in this homicide case, check out the horoscope in Inquirer's Comic Relief on Friday, April 8. Then, look for the blind item in SUPER on Saturday, April 9. Also search the Classified ads this Sunday, April 10 — what you'll find out may surprise you! Then proceed to witness the story unravel in Chapter 9 also this Sunday, April 10 in the LIFESTYLE section.

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Compiled by L. Mangulat

GOLF: 2005 Augusta Masters Day One Preview; tomorrow at 3 a.m.; Day One; tomorrow at 4 a.m.; STAR Sports – The year's first major tees off from Augusta, Georgia.
BILLIARDS: San Miguel Asian 9 Ball Tour; 2 p.m. (r); STAR Sports – Take another look at semifinal pool action from Jakarta.
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

RP 'to spy' on its main SEAG rivals

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SPORTS espionage!

Weird as it sounds, but that's what Team Philippines intends to do to carry out its plan to capture the overall title in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Philsoc official Joey Romasanta yesterday said the Philsoc will be coordinating with the country's embassies and consulates within the SEA region to facilitate some sort of a "scouting report" on our rival countries.

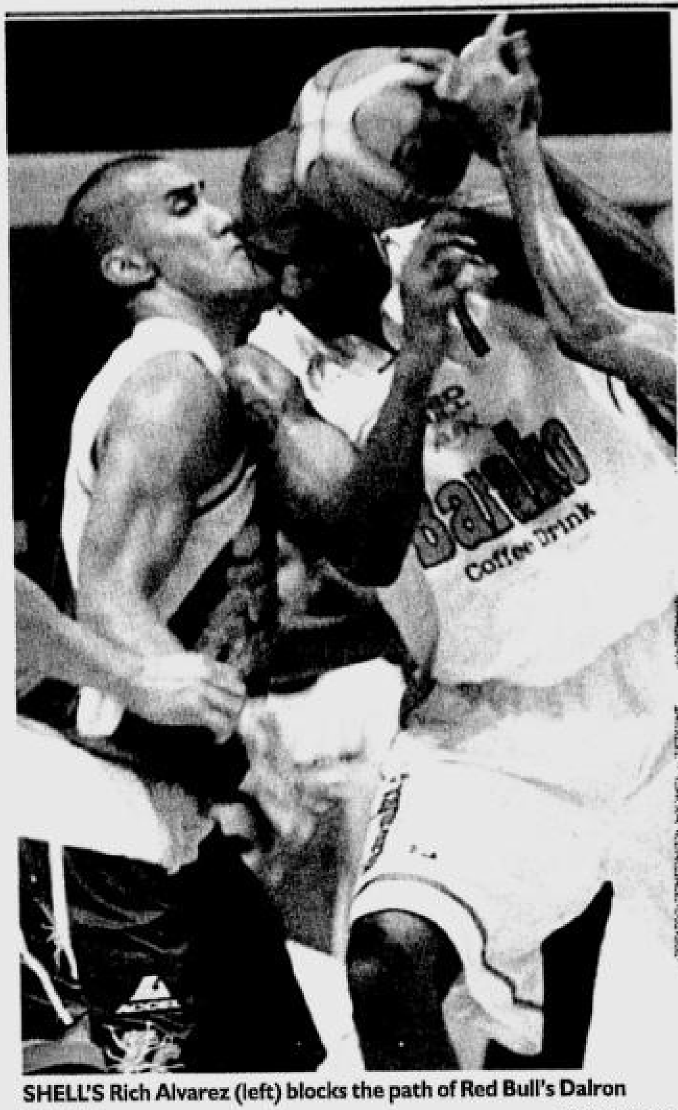
"How can we gauge our strength and even predict the number of medals we will win if we don't know how our opponents are doing?" said Romasanta.

The idea, according to the former Gintong Alay chief, is to ask embassies and consulates to delegate a small team of people who will gather information on the training other countries are undertaking for the Nov. 27-to Dec. 5 SEA Games.

"Maybe they can put up a video camera in the training venues and observe how the athletes are doing," Romasanta said. "That would be a big help for us."

The proposal came on the heels of a report submitted by at least 41 national sports associations that the country stands to win no less than 150 gold medals in the Games.

With that figure, the country can handily win the overall title.



SHELL'S Rich Alvarez (left) blocks the path of Red Bull's Dalron Johnson. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Red Bull stops Wilson, Shell

GAME TODAY (*Lagao Gym, Gen. Santos City*)
6:15 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Purefoods
GAMES TOMORROW (*Cuneta Astrodome*)
4:45 p.m.—Red Bull vs Coca-Cola
7:35 p.m.—FedEx vs Talk 'N Text

By June Navarro

GETTING into early foul trouble has become a consistent weakness for Wesley Wilson.

Red Bull Barako exploited this yesterday and carved out an emphatic 98-89 victory over Shell for a share of the lead in the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Saddled with fouls right in the first quarter, the 6-10 Wilson lost his rhythm throughout and failed to sustain a pair of 40-point explosions he accomplished against Coca-Cola and San Miguel Beer.

Wilson was reduced to a sitting duck on the defensive end after committing a third personal foul just in the first 10 minutes of play.

"That's exactly what we wanted to do," said Enrico Villanueva, who combined forces with Nelson Asaytono and the 7-ft EJ Fiehl in containing Wilson in the paint.

"Our game plan was to prevent another 40-point game from Wilson and put him into foul trouble," Villanueva added.

Asaytono reached a milestone after dislodging Philip Cezar (12,077 points) from fifth place in the league's all-time scoring list. Asaytono drained a short jumper over Wilson with 6.47 minutes left to compile 12,081 points in 17 years.

Except for the 38-year-old Asaytono, the retired players in the top 6 scoring list—Ramon Fernandez, Abet Guidaben, Alvin Patrimonio, Atoy Co and Cezar—had all captured an MVP plum.

Wilson fouled out with less than a minute to go with 17 points and seven rebounds. It was the first time Wilson failed to register double-double figures.

In contrast, Dalron Johnson had 27 points and 17 rebounds as the Barako notched their fourth victory in six games for a share of the lead with idle Purefoods and San Miguel Beer. The Turbochargers dropped to 4-3.

"We found a way to manage Wilson's output and put him in foul trouble," said Red Bull Barako coach Yeng Guiao.

The scores:

First Game

RED BULL 98—Johnson 27, Tugade 20, Asaytono 17, Ejercito 10, Villanueva 5, Valenzuela 5, Robinson 4, Meneses 4, Bagulo 2, Torion 2, Felhl 2, Ybañez 0.

SHELL 89—Dela Cruz 18, Wilson 17, Tubid 17, Mamaril 13, Ferreria 8, Alvarez 6, Yap 5, Sta. Maria 3, Cruz 2, Sharma 0, Sotto 0, Calagulo 0.

Quarters: 18-18, 44-38, 73-71, 98-89.

POC creates body to evaluate Pinoys' overall title prospect

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee has created the Sports and Rules Committee to look into the possibility of increasing or decreasing the number of events in all sports to be played in the coming Southeast Asian Games.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco has appointed athletics and chess president Go Teng Kok as chair of the committee given only three days to determine whether or not the 388 events approved for the coming Games is the right number.

The Sports and Rules Committee is also tasked to identify the potential medal yield of each National Sports Association that will participate in the Games.

The 388 events were approved during the last SEAG Federation Council meeting in Vietnam, where the Philippines, through Rep. Monico Puentevella, had requested for the inclusion of other events for the Nov. 27 to Dec. 5 meet.

Manila and three other key cities will host the Games, which comes back to the Philippines for the first time since 1991. No less than the overall championship is being targeted by the host country and Go's committee is expected to play a crucial role in the process.

The Sports and Rules Committee, where Red Dumuk, Ed Ponce, Graham Lim, Joaquin de Tagle and Mario Tanchanco serve as directors, met yesterday with officials from gymnastics, wushu, sepak, diving, chess, karatedo and body building.

These NSAs are hoping to come up with at least 16 events, including six in wushu, two in body building, two in diving and four in chess in the men's and women's blitz.

"What we want is for them (NSAs) to identify the events where they have a strong chance of winning," said Go. "The 388 events are not cast in stone and we can remove some events where the NSAs feel we have no chance of winning."

Go and his members would do the rounds with the 41 or so NSAs until Thursday before reporting to Cojuangco, who is expected to be elected president of the SEAGFC with the impending resignation of Celso Dayrit.

During the next meeting of the SEAGFC on April 29, Dayrit is expected to tender his resignation as SEAGFC head, the title normally reserved for the president of the hosting national Olympic Committee.

Fil-foreigners must join tryouts—PFF

By Roy Luarca

THEY honed their football skills abroad and are now willing to don their homeland's colors.

Foreign-based Filipinos with foreign-sounding names will be allowed to strut their stuff by the Philippine Football Federation provided they prove to be better than locally trained booters.

PFF president Johnny Romualdez yesterday said his federation is looking into the possibility of having five to six Fil-foreigners in both the men's and women's football teams for the coming Manila Southeast Asian Games.

"These players are willing to come home for tryouts at their own expense," said Romualdez. "Only if they turned out to be worthy of inclusion to the national team will we provide them with air fare and corresponding benefits."

Romualdez bared that midfielder Dennis Cagara of Italy and striker Hans Putzier of Germany will be flying in sometime in July to showcase their skills.

Attacking midfielders Philip Braggio of Italy and Chris Greatwich of England; striker Chad Gould, also of England, and midfielder Andy Prochnow have earlier expressed their desire to join the national pool.'

Greatwich is certain to earn a spot owing to his fine showing in the last Tiger Cup in December, but fellow Tiger Cupper Gould has to contend with other aspiring strikers.

Romualdez bared that despite lack of funds, PFF's global search for Filipino booters also involves women.

Expected to arrive next month are attacking midfielder Karen Esteva and Michelle Manrique, both from the United States.

Also being scouted is the daughter of former PBA star Francis Arnaiz, reportedly a good striker.

If the Fil-foreigners impress the coaching staff, they will be included in the national pool which will be sent to a training camp in Xiamen, China, from Sept. 15-Oct. 30 through the funding of the First Gentleman Foundation.

Also being planned are stints in the Arafura Games next month, the Asian Women's Championship in Vietnam in June and an invitational tournament in Manila with the Hong Kong and Taiwan squads.

"In theory, the PFF's plans and programs are well in place," said Romualdez. "If all our projections are met, then there's a bright chance that we would finally earn a football medal in the SEA Games."

MECHELL Matuguina partners Juliet Mae Marikit as University of San Jose-Recoletos beat University of Southern Phil. in the Nestea Beach Volleyball Vis-Min elims yesterday. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Indon coach blamed for 6 missing players

AT LEAST one head will roll.

The foreign coach of the Philippine Pencak Silat Association will get the ax at the end of the year as officials blamed him for the disappearance of six members of the national pool after a competition in Paris.

Sultan Jamalul Kiram, the pencak silat president, said Indonesian coach Suhartuno, the RP mentor the last five years, "facilitated" the trip of eight players last month to the first Paris championship although the tournament was originally not in the association's schedule of activities leading to the Southeast Asian Games later this year.

"We have recommended (to the Philippine Sports Commission) that his contract be rescinded," Kiram said.

The six players who remained in Paris were Vivencio Dunguez, Larry Sarreal and Alelie Hernandez of the Air Force, Al Jabbar Sangkola, Neil John Ballosa and Mark Cometa.

The brightest performer in Paris, Christopher Yabut, returned home and will now be the anchor of the pencak silat contingent. Yabut won the world championship in Singapore last December but he has yet to win a gold in the SEAG.

Kiram said pencak silat was originally looking at winning at least five gold medals in the coming Games and three of the six who jumped ship were potential champions.

PSC officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez said he is giving the six athletes until April 22 to show up.

If not, Ramirez said he would recommend the cancellation of their passports and, in the case of the enlisted men, a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces.

A check for P500,000, given by the FG-appointed godfather for the sport, Pacific Steel, was given for the trip, Kiram said. Suhartuno, Kiram added, also went to Philam Life for additional support and was able to solicit P100,000. *Musong R. Castillo*

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La Salle golfers trounce Ateneo bets

LA Salle completed a 1-2-3 finish in the championship division en route to a lopsided victory against Ateneo during their recent dual meet held in three courses of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Bobby Celestino, Rafael Garcia and Jan Michael Yee all came up with 79s at the Dye course to earn 20 of the 22 points staked in their division, where points were doubled, and power La Salle to a rousing 63-36 win.

La Salle also made a big surge in Class B with Emmanuel Inumerable (net 71), Jose Mari Lagdameo (72), Teodrico Patag Jr. (74) and Ramon Villareal (74), sweeping all four places and the 11 points that went on offer.

La Salle and Ateneo actually finished with four wins each in the tourney presented by Smart Communications and PLDT, but the big gains made by La Salle's championship and Class B players turned the duel in its favor.

La Salle thus gained temporary ownership of the Classic Cup until next year's meet. A team needed to win the tourney three years in a row to keep permanent possession of the Cup which replaces the Valdes Trophy the La Sallians retired two years ago.

The tourney was also backed by International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), OOCL (Philippines) Inc. and Johnny Air Cargo as premier sponsors. American Express, Cost U Less, Eagle Express, EPCIB, Institute Saintre, Manila Bank, Salonpas and Transcom were special sponsors.

Eddie Jacinto claimed the senior title earlier played at Alabang Country Club and Miguel Garcia took the open division plum where teammates Manuel Zarcal and Kentaro Mitsuma placed second and third, respectively, for La Salle.

It was only in Class A play where Ateneo managed to dominate. Moshe Baldo won with a 75 while Manfred Guanko and Gabriel Atienza placed third and fourth with 77s.

Other winners for Ateneo were Vicente Jose Laza in Class C, Ramon Garcia in Class D and Katrina Gonzalez in the ladies division.

In the Fellowship division, Jacinto and Gil Yuzon pooled a 135 to win by five over the tandem of Carlos Iñigo Jr-Carlos Sison Jr.

Montaña shoots for second win

MONTAÑA Pawnshop's enthusiasm may have been slightly dampened after losing starting forward Al Magpayo to injury in the opening game of the PBL Unity Cup.

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
2 p.m.—Bacchus vs Montaña
4 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Granny Goose

But the Jewels have to deal with the reality of his season-long absence starting today when they battle Bacchus Energy Drink at 2 p.m. at the Makati Coliseum.

"We won our first game for Al," said coach Robert Sison, whose Jewels will be gunning for a second straight win. "But now, we have to be consistent."

Magpayo broke his left forearm bone in the first quarter of a victory over Harbour Centre last week.

Coach Jun Tan will also try to make some adjustments when his Granny Goose collides with Harbour Centre at 4 p.m.

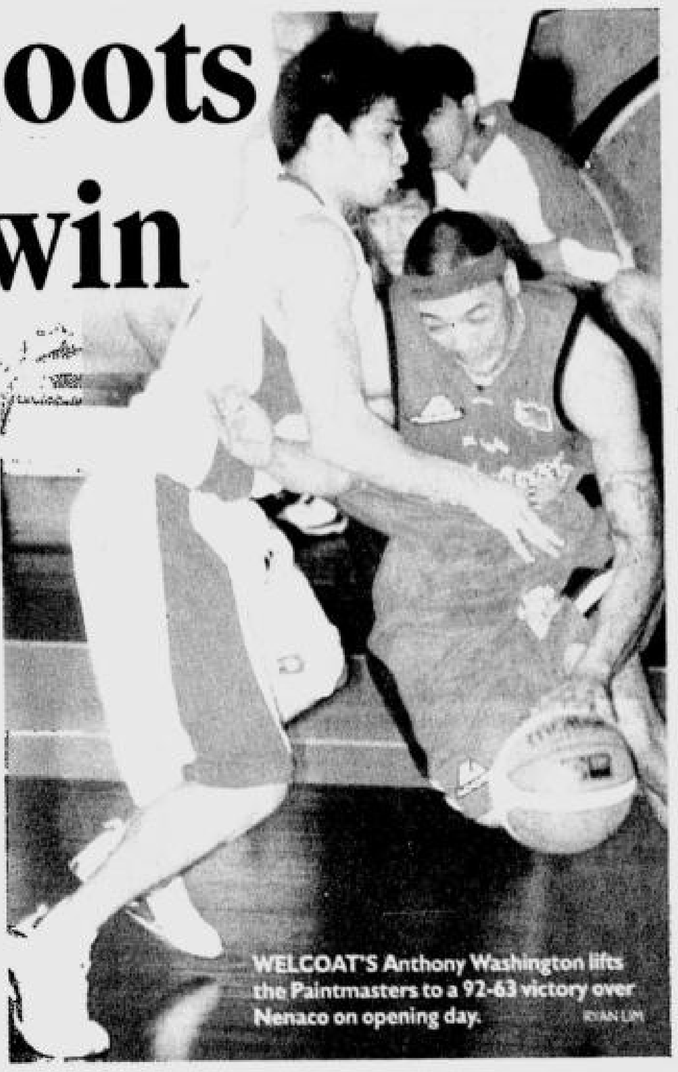
"We're still working on our offense," said coach Jun Tan after Granny Goose posted a 62-49 victory over Bacchus last Saturday. "Our problem is our slow rotation. Our new players are still not familiar with the plays."

And Granny Goose certainly has to step up to keep pace with Harbour Centre's frenetic offense. Led by college hotshots Mac Cardona, L.A. Tenorio and Gabby Espinas, the Portmasters nearly pulled a major upset over PBL Open champion Montaña.

Cardona delivered 26 points but the Jewels played smarter and steadier in overtime to win, 81-75, last Saturday.

Erick dela Cuesta rose to the occasion after Montaña's veteran shooter Alex Compton was held to only six points.

Dela Cuesta fired 15 of his 19 points beyond the arc, including a three-pointer in the last 27.4 seconds of the fourth quarter to force overtime. *Jasmine W. Payo*



WELCOAT'S Anthony Washington lifts the Paintmasters to a 92-63 victory over Nenaco on opening day. RYAN LIM

RP's first nature and fitness trail at La Mesa

AS a means to celebrate Earth Month, Petron is establishing the Philippine's first-ever Nature and Fitness Trail, a path inside the La Mesa Eco-Park, where nature lovers and fitness enthusiasts can jog, have a leisurely walk or exercise—for free.

The Petron Nature and Fitness Trail is a 1.2-kilometer course of solid and compact soil, where fitness aficionados can do their training regimen.

It incorporates a series of exercise stations, a sign is posted designating an exercise and a recommended number of repetitions. Participants run and walk along the trails, pausing to do push-ups, chin-ups and many other exercises.

Inauguration of the Petron Nature and Fitness Trail is set on Sunday.

"The inauguration of the Petron Fitness Trail is a meaningful milestone for us," said Petron chair Nicasio Alcantara. "It reflects our commitment to fuel life through good health and clean environment."

A number of activities will spice up the day-long festivities, which begin at 8 a.m.

Highlight of the inauguration is the planting of seedlings around the Petron Nature and Fitness Trail and a fun walk for kids an adults.

Reds take lead in Jungolf's Ryder Cup-style showdown

BAGUIO—Justin Dy nailed a five-foot putt to save par on the 16th and lift teammates Ryan Monsalve and Chris Cartwright to a victory that enabled the Red team to take an early 8-7 lead over their Blue counterparts in their Ryder Cup-style showdown serving as the second leg of the Samsung Jungolf Tour at the Camp John Hay Golf Club course here.

Dy's big putt completed a 3 and 2 win for the Reds over Blue rivals Joaquin Lerma, Diego Ludovice and Gerard Marcelo that also capped a day of exciting matches.

Red won the last three matches of the day where the best-ball scramble format was used with Princess Supera-Natalie Limandibrata and Ahn Sieun-Felicia Medalla also delivering for their team's cause.

It was also on the 16th hole where the Red team's Cyna Rodriguez made an eagle on the way to salvaging a draw for his partnership with Crystal Faith Superal in the battle of the team captains.

Crystal and Cyna's unexpected draw again Steven Limandibrata-Wolen Juan Superal provided the spark the Reds needed to move ahead.

The Blue team was ahead, 4 ½ to 2 ½, after the first seven matches but the Reds earned 5 ½ points from the next eight against only 2 ½ by their rivals.

"It was a very exciting day for everybody, the kids and parents ended up cheering every shot," said Jungolf president Raoul Lachica.

Winning their matches for the Red side were Rance Paglin-Agustin Pacheco, Jedric Tumamao-Joseph Arañas, Charlene Abalos-Jemar Mapili, Marvi Monsalve-Ann Sabater while Justin Pe-Annika Martinez drew with Aristeo Mata-Bobby Vallete.

The Reds also got full points from Chris dela Cruz-Aaron Dimabuyu, Yoon Sungbin-Matthew Quiban, Koo Jong Gyoon-EJ Ang, Lawrence Celestino-Jonar Austria, Frances Marquez-Agustin Mata and Alfonso Reyes-Gerard Mactal.

S'woods Invitational starts today

SIX hundred players eye a share of the multimillion holes-in-one prizes and two coveted division honors in the four-day Invitational tournament starting today at the Masters and Legends championship courses of Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club.

Holes-in-one prizes worth P7 million include a Mitsubishi Lancer GLX M/T, a Royal Caribbean Mexican Riviera cruise for two with Korean Air business-class tickets, an El Nido vacation package for two inclusive of airfare and a Wilson iron set.

Manila Southwoods chair Robert John Sobrepeña said the courses are in fine shape for the invitational.

He led the ceremonial tee-off yesterday with Mitsubishi Motors VP-marketing Mel Dizon, Diamond Motors president George Blaylock, Royal Caribbean president Marilen Yaptangco, Korean Air's Dong Sik Yum, El Nido's Eduardo Miranda and Samsung president Spencer Shim.

Mitsubishi Motors, Diamond Motors, Royal Caribbean International, and Wilson Sports along with Samsung and newcomers Korean Air and El Nido Resorts make up this year's tournament presenters.

Turf Company, Globe Telecom and Nestlé are major sponsors of the event which also stakes a Club Car DS golf cart as a hole-in-one prize.

Britesmile, CJH Dev. Co., CJH Manor, Citibank, Club Leisure, Evergreen, Miramar Tuna Belly, MRT, Pan de Manila, Philippine Wine Merchant, Saud Beach Resort, Splash Island, Starmaker Fireworks, thegolfshop@barontravel, TMS Shipping and Vein Care are the other backers.

SPORTSWATCH

Matinee idol, director top Enduro race

MATINEE idol Jordan Herrera showed his athletic side as he teamed up with Shell Yamaha team rider Bobet Vidanes to rule the Beginner's Open Production of the 2nd Invitational Endurocross at the Sta. Lucia's Palo Alto Racetrack in Barangay Pinugay, Baras Rizal. Herrera's victory with his partner Vidanes, the director of Wowowee and Game Ka Na Ba? on ABS-CBN, was something to crow about as it was achieved against a field that included Maico Buncio and Arnel Lacnit (2nd place) and Ecos Benlo and Adrian Alberto (3rd place)—regular campaigners in the local motorcycle circuit. Nani Pazcoguin of the organizing KP5 said the event drew a record crowd of 8,000 and will be telecast on Sport Unlimited, Byk 101 and Sports TV.

BRC Circuit hosts Asian Formula 3

THE BATANGAS Racing Circuit will stage the 2005 Addict Mobile Asian Formula 3 Super Prix and two major racing spectacles this weekend at the BRC Circuit in Barangay Maligaya, Rosario, Batangas. Defending champion Christian Jones of Australia is eyeing a second straight Asian Formula 3 title in this event sponsored by Addict Mobile, PLDT My Pad, Yokohama, Motolite, Lima Hotel, Boysen, TNT, RCL and Top Gear. Pepon Marave of Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO also aims to regain the crown he won two years ago. Attention will be on Promotional Class champion Tyson Sy of SpeedTech Asia and Dado Pena of Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi Team Asia.

Maca flies to Bangkok for WBO bout

FORMER Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation bantamweight champion Jess Maca leaves today for Bangkok to face Thailand's World Boxing Organization Asia-Pacific featherweight titlist Terdsak Jandaeng on April 11 at the Leamson Beach in Hlangsuan, Chompom, Thailand. Maca will be facing an undefeated and WBO No. 1 ranked rival being groomed to vie for the WBO crown against reigning champ Scott Harrison. Terdsak has never gone the full route since winning the WBO regional title. In his last fight, Terdsak needed just four rounds to dispose of Dondon Lapuz in Bangkok on March 9. In 58 fights, Maca has won 43 (17 by KO) against 19 losses and six draws. In the undercard, WBO Asia-Pacific superfly champ Pramuansak Phosuwan takes on Filipino Roselito Campana. ***Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor***

YMCA Makati offers swim lessons

YMCA Makati is offering swimming lessons at No. 7 Sacred Heart Plaza Street, San Antonio Village, Makati City. Courses are tadpole, beginners, advanced and competitive which will be held in five batches: 1st batch (March 28-April 8), 2nd batch (April 11-April 22), 3rd batch (April 25-May 6), 4th batch (May 9-May 20), 5th batch (May 23-June 3). Call 899-6380, 899-6382, 899-6101, 899-6103, 899-6105, 895-9525.

Rotary golf seeks Guinness entry

WITH AN unprecedented 17 holes-in-one prizes, the 19th RGFFP golf fellowship competition to celebrate Rotary's 100 years on April 13-16 in Baguio City may yet land in the Guinness Book of World Records. "This is a big possibility," said RGFFP president Pocholo Borromeo of the tourney set at Baguio's Camp John Hay and Baguio Country Club courses. Fabulous prizes worth P2.2 million are at stake. In case no aces are made on the 3 pins greens, the prizes will be raffled off during the awarding ceremonies, said awards and raffles chair Efren V. Aquino. Tournament co-chair Albert Que and Nonoy Braga remind Rotarians that deadline for the early bird registration is tomorrow. For inquiries, call 0920-9199000 or 0920-9087635, 721-2667 loc. 110 and 72747977 or e-mail rgffp1987@yahoo.com.

NCA derby championship today

ANOTHER big crowd is expected at the Araneta Coliseum today when the championship round of the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-cock Derby gets under way at 5 p.m. with more than 50 fights lined up. The elimination round last Tuesday was dominated by Vice Gov. Boyet Joson (VGB Excalibur), Rene Medina (Lucky Rin II Firefly Binangonan), Marcel Julao (MTJ Bros Firefly), Jun Santiago and Albert Dichavez (Joe Firefly Thunderbird 12) and Rep. Ronnie Puno (Wild Wing Sundance), who posted three wins each. Joko Joke Joke of Gerry Ramos tallied 2.5 points. Meanwhile, the next edition of NCA 7-Cock Derby sizzles on April 12 and 14. Another 7-cocker is slated on April 26 and 28 with Gov. Ito Ynares, Claude Bautista and Richard Bates heading the participants.

Big Event 6-cock lines up 70 fights

IT WILL be a slam-bang confrontation among 23 big-time cockers on Saturday when the 330 K Big Event 6-Cock Derby unfolds at the Las Piñas Coliseum. According to Patrick Antonio, all of the participants are automatically considered as hosts of the event. With more that 70 fights lined up, the event will start at 4 p.m. Included in the elite list of participants are Gerry Ramos, Binangonan Balbina Group, Benjie Lim, Lito Orillaza, Rene Medina, Pol Estrellado, Mulawin Group, 2005 World Slasher co-champion Boy Marzo, boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, Boy de Roca, Dicky Lim, Patrick Antonio, Golden Circle entry, JU Listana, Rey Briones and Boy Royo. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Meanwhile, regular hackfights are being staged at LPC from Monday to Sunday. Scheduled today is the "No Entry Fee Fastest Win" with P10,000 at stake. For inquiries, call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

NBC President Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla makes the ceremonial toss between Forward Taguig's Bernard de Guia (left) and Laguna Spring's Chris Corbin. With him are Parañaque Vice Mayor Anjo Yllana, Turo Valenzona, BAP secretary general Graham Lim and NBC secretary general Tito Palma (partly covered).

Taguig, Parañaque cagers triumph

MAYOR Freddie Tinga's Forward Taguig came from behind to nip Laguna Spring, 87-84, while Vice Mayor and actor/TV host Anjo Yllana's Parañaque Jets held off the Cavite Insurers, 87-80, Tuesday at the start of the Spring Cooking Oil-NBC pre-season basketball series at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Ricky Ricafuente reinforced Taguig, which lost to the Spring of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro in the Panasonic-NBC pre-season series in Cebu last January. The Insurers of Bacoor Vice Mayor Edwin Malvar took a 23-15 lead over the Jets, who paraded ex-pro Bong Alvarez. Action in the five-team series sanctioned by the Basketball Association of the Philippines resumed yesterday.

A night to remember

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IT is almost SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) that after watching a game in America—whether it be NBA, NFL or NL/AL—the spectator doesn't normally go straight home. Most go to a nearby pub or restaurant for either a beer or snack—or even both. Almost always, there's a trip before the final trip for home.

A nightcap if you wish.

A one-for-the-road if you will.

A stop to say hi! to an acquaintance at the bar or do a mere swap of high-fives with fellow sports buffs. There's always a reason to anything that we do, right?

I did one of those: A nightcap cum one-for-the-road—and more—sometime ago in America.

Now, remember that piece here on Tuesday about my first ever live NBA game at the Staples Center in Los Angeles?

After the game featuring the Lakers against the Clippers (the Lakers won by the way), Jun Magturo and I proceeded to a nearby pub located inside the Holiday Inn.

We could not avoid the side trip. A friend of mine, Tony Sisante, was waiting there. Tony couldn't buy a ticket to the game, even if it wasn't the title playoffs yet. Not a surprise, though. In America, even if an NBA game isn't crucial, tickets are as rare as a Beatle song on 45s.

"Do not worry, I know the rules of the game here," Tony said when I told him Mike Magturo had only two tickets for the game. "For me to get inside the Staples Center, I need to buy a ticket from a scalper. I'm not crazy to do that. I'd rather buy beer than make the scalper happy."

Tony's a grizzled Angelino. He's been an LA-er for decades and watching NBA games live doesn't thrill him that much anymore.

"I've seen 'em all already, the classic games, the great players from Jerry West to Jabbar to Magic Johnson" he said. "In the olden days, I used to buy tickets for my friends from people directly involved in the NBA. I used them in aid of my job, which was partly to make NBA-crazed business associates happy. One way to do that is provide them with NBA tickets."

But all that is behind him now and Tony is presently at peace with himself, with the world.

This evening, the stocky Tony, wearing black leather jacket, wouldn't only drink beer. He'd lace that with brandy and all three of us would soon find ourselves drinking brandy.

All around us were the same people who watched the Lakers-Clippers game at the nearby Staples Center.

"Look at all these jerks," said Tony. "They are here to drink and not to talk one bit about the game you just watched. Every game that they watch, that's only incidental. The game is but a reason for them to be out of the house, to drink, to be merry, to be with friends."

Tony ordered quezadillas for pica-pica. When the waiter arrived, he had a clubhouse sandwich for us.

"Oh, sorry 'bout that," said the waiter when told he got the wrong order. "I'll get what you ordered, guys."

He withdrew the clubhouse sandwich. Minutes later, he was bringing the stuff to another table. He winked at me when he passed by me.

Our quezadillas soon arrived. Umm. Delicious. It went well with our drinks.

After four rounds, we called it a night.

Oops! Wait a minute.

"The night's not complete without a trip to Chinatown for a bowl of soup," I said.

Tony and Jun could only agree.

Tony, who knew L.A. like the back of his hand, took us to this place called Full House—the only one open at this ungodly hour; it was about 1 a.m. already.

Heaven. Full House serves the best brocoli-wanton soup in L.A.

I think I was asleep the whole time that Jun was driving us back to Mike Magturo's townhouse in Tustin City.

Lobster, title on Phil's Masters menu

AUGUSTA, Georgia—Phil Mickelson revealed the two major items on his Masters menu this week—lobster ravioli and retaining his title.

As the Masters champion he will host the Champions dinner at the Augusta National Golf Club on Tuesday, an exclusive green jacket only affair bringing together past winners.

Hosting golf's most exclusive dinner is one of the many perks that come with being Masters champion but for Mickelson there is another benefit he has savored more.

"One of the best perks is I haven't heard the question who is the best player in the world never to win a major?" said Mickelson, who had worn that unwelcome label after playing 47 majors without a victory.

Instead, the American left-hander has been hounded by another question—what's for dinner?

Since Ben Hogan began the tradition in 1952, what's for dinner? has been perhaps the most frequently asked question at Augusta, prompting occasionally queasy responses.

Sandy Lyle tested the palates of golf's greats when he served up Haggis, a stomach-churning mixture of lungs, liver and heart boiled in a sheep's stomach, after his 1988 victory.

Three-time champion Nick Faldo served shepherd's pie, Bernhard Langer had schnitzel and Mike Weir selected caribou.

But for Mickelson, the meal is not as important as the company.

"It's fun to have dinner plans this evening, I know we're having lobster ravioli," said Mickelson.

"The dinner is a great perk but it's not something that I've really looked forward to or am ecstatic about," he added. "I'm going to enjoy the fact that I can hang around with some of the Masters greats. That's what is exciting.

"But my mindset is more concerned about trying to defend this championship and trying to win than it is to have dinner.

"As much fun as it will be, I want to get ready for the tournament. *Reuters*

Masters on Star Sports

STAR Sports has LIVE coverage of all four rounds of the first major of the year, the 69th Masters starting tomorrow until April 11 (Manila time). In addition, ESPN STAR Sports is offering a rare treat for Filipino golf fans as all four majors—the Masters, the US Open, the British Open and the PGA Championship—ill be aired live this year.

Kobe, Lakers out of playoffs

PHOENIX—Some were convinced of it from the day Shaquille O'Neal was traded last July. Others saw it coming as soon as Rudy Tomjanovich resigned as coach at midseason. The rest came around during last month's eight-game losing streak.

The Lakers—the franchise of Wilt Chamberlain, Jerry West, Magic Johnson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Kobe Bryant—were going to miss the playoffs for the first time in 11 years and only the fourth time since moving to Los Angeles in 1960.

What was a foregone conclusion for weeks became reality Tuesday night at America West Arena. A 125-99 loss to the Phoenix Suns coupled with Denver's 94-91 victory over Memphis laid to rest the most disappointing Lakers season in recent memory.

"I think that in their minds, we were eliminated before tonight's game," interim coach Frank Hamblen said.

Bryant, who sat out with a bruised shin, was the first player to exit the locker room afterward, carrying a pair of game shoes that went unworn. For the first time in his NBA career, Bryant will not be a part of the postseason.

"You know what? Stuff happens," Bryant said. "This is the path that we're on right now. We will bounce back, and we will be back."

Bryant was asked how he would spend his first May off, whether he would watch the playoffs on television or not, and answered: "I'm going to work."

Even so, the second-guessing will start this morning, the first question being how the Lakers could send O'Neal to Miami, turn things over to Bryant and end up as only the seventh team in history to play in the NBA Finals one season and miss the playoffs the next.

To make matters worse, the Lakers (33-41) now trail the Clippers by a half-game in the standings.

If not for the purple jerseys, the Lakers would have been all but unrecognizable as they were eliminated. Bryant did not dress for the game, Lamar Odom is on the injured list, and Chris Mihm joined him there with a sprained ankle.

That left the Lakers down three starters and forced to make do with Brian Grant, Luke Walton and Devean George against the Suns, who boast the NBA's best record at 57-17.

Caron Butler did his best to spark the Lakers, finishing with 30 points, but Phoenix connected on 17 3-pointers, a record for a Lakers opponent.

That started the countdown to the draft lottery. The end had been forecast for weeks, with the only hope coming from the minute possibility that Denver would lose its remaining games and the Lakers would win all of theirs.

"Next year, when we're rolling," Butler said, "we'll look back at this and just remember where we were at."

"It just wasn't meant to be," Bryant said. "But we'll be back."

In other games, Boston tripped Washington, 116-108; New Jersey humbled Cleveland, 111-80; the LA Clippers eked past Charlotte, 104-102; Miami whipped Chicago, 104-86; Indiana demolished New York, 97-79; New Orleans clubbed Atlanta, 96-86; Dallas creamed Orlando, 114-105; Utah clobbered Portland, 90-79; Golden State tweaked Houston, 122-117 and Sacramento trounced Seattle, 122-101. *New York Times News Service*

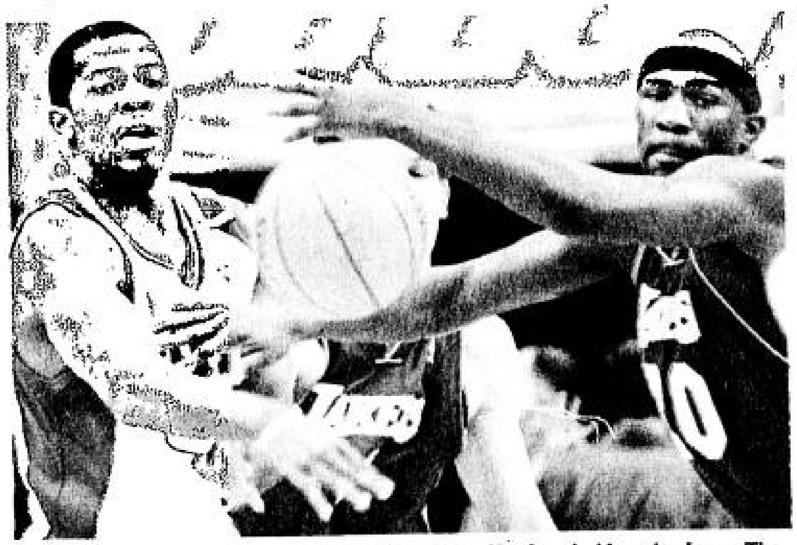
Que blows British Open bid

KUALA LUMPUR—Angelo Que blew his first chance of crashing this year's British Open field when he struggled to a 77 Wednesday in the first round of the International Final Qualifying-Asia at the Saujana Golf and Country Club.

The Filipino winner of last year's Vietnam Open stood 11 strokes behind co-leaders Rick Gibson of Canada and Mardan Mamat of Singapore with only a round left in the event that will select three Asian qualifiers for the Open set at St. Andrews this July.

Que, earlier named to complete the Asian roster in the Visa Dynasty Cup showdown against a Shigeki Maruyama-led Japan side in China next week, was in a tie with Pat Giles of Australia for 29th place in the 31-man field.

The three qualifiers will join Thai Thongchai Jaidee, who had earlier secured a British Open slot as Asian Tour Order of Merit champion.



PHOENIX'S Joe Johnson knocks the ball loose from Los Angeles' Jumaine Jones. The Suns knocked the Kobe-era Lakers out of the playoff hunt with a 125-99 rout. REUTERS

Lady college teacher dies after getting knocked out

DENVER—A teacher who won a regional boxing title three years ago died from a head injury she sustained in a Golden Gloves competition, apparently becoming the first woman to die in a sanctioned bout.

Becky Zerlentes, 34, died on Sunday, Howard Daniel of the Denver County coroner's office said on Monday. The initial cause of death was blunt force trauma to the head causing internal bleeding, but results from an autopsy were not immediately available.

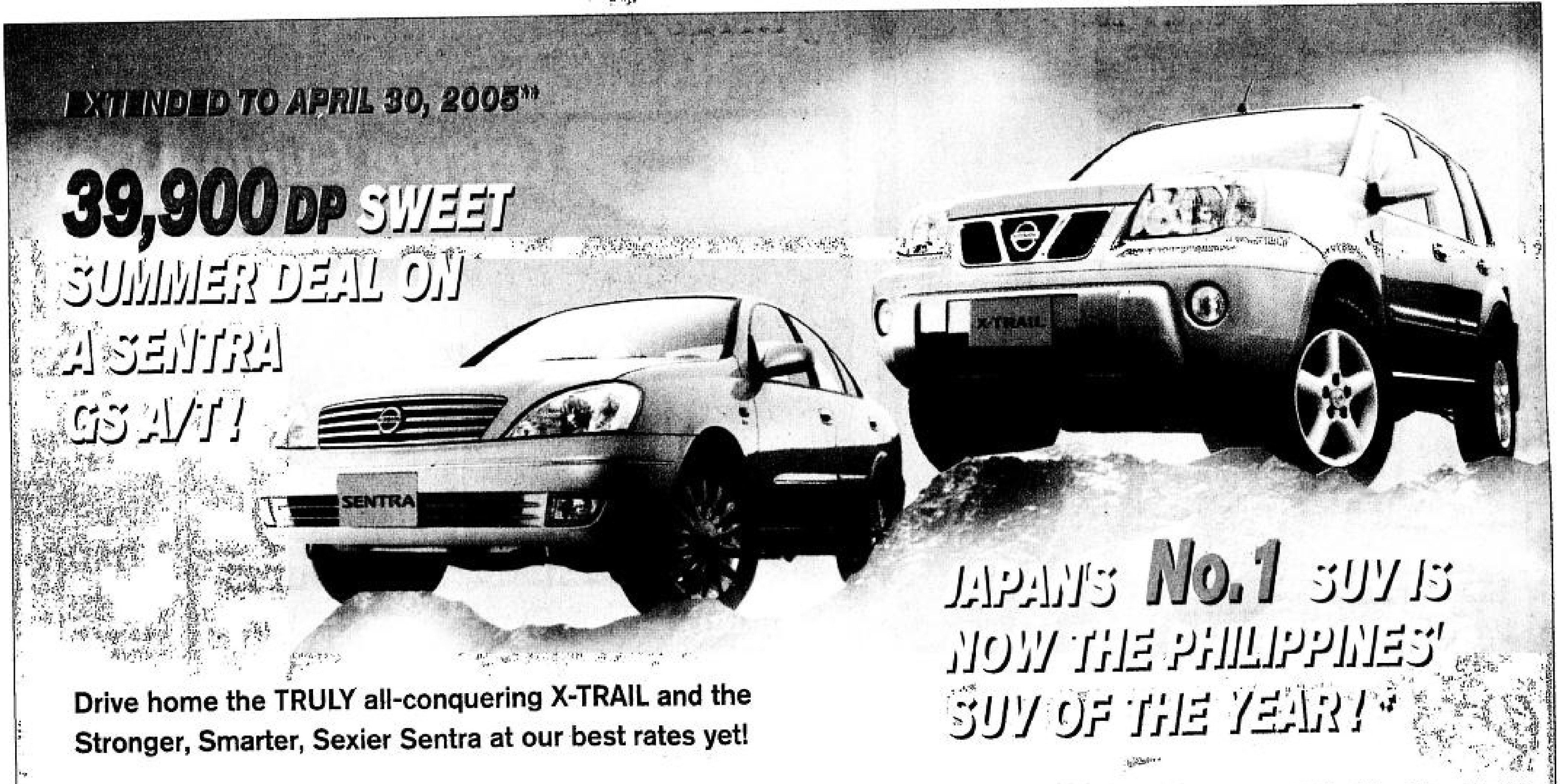
Zerlentes is apparently the first female amateur boxer to die in a sanctioned match, USA Boxing spokesperson Julie Goldsticker said.

Zerlentes was hit by a punch from Heather Schmitz, and despite wearing protective headgear, she fell unconscious during the third round of a bout on Saturday.

"I didn't want to hurt her," Schmitz said after the fight, when Zerlentes was still alive. "I feel very badly about that. I feel horrible how it ended. You don't go in there with the idea (that) I want to hurt this person."

Denver police Detective Teresa Garcia said on Tuesday that homicide investigators were assigned to the case as a routine measure.

Zerlentes, a geography instructor at Front Range Community College, had a 6-4 card and won a regional Golden Gloves in 2002, said Jeanne DePriest, chief of officials for Colorado Golden Gloves, and the manager of the team for which Zerlentes boxed, Hard Knocks. **AP**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Hyper characters imbue 'Spanglish' with psychological unction

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ADAM Sandler is known for his yuk-filled comedies, but his current starrer, "Spanglish" takes his talent to a higher, better level, so we trust that you will try to catch the movie before it disappears from local screens.

Fact is, the film isn't *really* about Sandler's character, at least not centrally. It's heartening to see the bankable comedy star graciously allowing the production's true lead characters, a Mexican woman and her young daughter, to dominate the movie. Most other stars would have refused to be "upstaged" in such a fashion.

But that's OK with Sandler, who is secure enough about his star status to deviate from the norm in these key ways.

"Spanglish" tells the affecting tale of a Mexican single mother named Flor (**Paz Vega**), who works her fingers to the bone to give her little daughter a good education.

She's so determined to give her child a promising future that she enters the United States illegally to look for a better-paying job.

Despite the fact that she doesn't speak English, she finds work as an all-around maid in the home of a popular chef (Sandler), his wife (**Tea Leoni**), their daughter and son, Leoni's mother (**Cloris Leachman**).

We're already 15 minutes into the film, but this is the first time that we see Sandler. The minute we catch sight of him, however, he engagingly asserts his character's presence as the loving but much put-upon husband of Leoni's frenetically neurotic character.

Her *tour de force* performance establishes Leoni as a prodigiously compelling and risk-taking actress, and gives the production its unique edge.

This is further added to by Leachman's own portrayal of an old alcoholic and former singing star, whose own wild youth is pointed to by Leoni's character as the reason why she's become such a bundle of neuroses.

As the story further unfolds, we discover that, while these hyper characters imbue the film with its special psychological unction, the production's central themes are actually the clash of cultures exemplified by the American and Mexican characters, and differing attitudes regarding the nurturing of love in families, especially in children.

There's more than a hint of incipient romance between the unhappy husband and the beautiful Mexican maid, but this too isn't the movie's main focus.

They do help each other sort out their respective familial concerns and conundrums, however, further underlining the fact that these are the major thematic points this movie want to make.

These are significant points, but the film wears its serious intent lightly, and yet with telling emotional insight.

Best of all, "Spanglish" is illuminated by the incandescent performance turned in by Vega as the Mexican woman whose love for her daughter makes her forget her own happiness. And Sandler's quieter portrayal has an affecting power all its own.

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult

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BOOGEYMAN
2:15 / 4:30 / 6:45 / 9:00
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
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CLOSER
12:25 / 2:35 / 4:45 / 6:55 / 9:05
BE COOL
1:50 / 4:20 / 6:50 / 9:20
ROBOTS
1:15 / 3:50 / 6:25 / 9:00

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DREW Barrymore

Turning 30, still unsure

CHICAGO—Drew Barrymore hit a milestone in February, but she's no closer to finding the answers.

"Turning 30 means taking all the things from my 20s that worked, but getting rid of the rest," she told the Chicago Sun-Times on Sunday. "But I'd be lying if I didn't say there are times when I still don't know who I am."

These days she's in love with singer Fabrizio Moretti, drummer for The Strokes. She was married a month in 1994 to bartender Jeremy Thomas. She wed comedian Tom Green in 2001 and the union lasted a few months.

"As you know, I've tried marriage, but I haven't tried children yet," said Barrymore, who has a new film, "Fever Pitch," opposite Jimmy Fallon opening this week in the United States.

"I want to be the smartest, most selfless version of myself before I have children.

AP

PHOTO COURTESY OF CELEBRITYBLOG.NET
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DUAL role for handsome newcomer

Brandon Routh is new Superman

PRINCIPAL photography is underway in Sydney, Australia on Warner Bros. Pictures' highly anticipated action adventure "Superman Returns," it was announced by Jeff Robinov, WB president of production.

Directed by Bryan Singer ("The Usual Suspects"), the film stars newcomer Brandon Routh, Kate Bosworth ("Blue Crush"), and Oscar-winner Kevin Spacey ("American Beauty").

Routh, who has previously made guest appearances on the television series "Cold Case" and "Gilmore Girls," will play the dual roles of Clark Kent and the Man of Steel. Bosworth plays Lois Lane, and Kevin Spacey is Superman's archenemy, Lex Luthor.

"We are thrilled to have such a cast," Robinov said. "We look forward to creating a film that deepens the rich mythology that continues to make Superman one of the most popular and intriguing super heroes of all time."

Singer explained: "Rather than being a remake of the original movie, this film explores Superman's influence on the global culture."

"Superman Returns" is scheduled to shoot in and around Sydney through mid-August, and will be released in June 2006.

Jodi: We never …

From page A28

denied reports that it was the wish of her mother, Mercedita, to see her settle down. "I was hurt that my mother had to be dragged into this," she said. "Pampi and I have been together for four years. Our parents knew that tying the knot was the next logical step."

But not a baby, not yet. "Definitely not this year," she said. "We have to save up for that."

Now that they are married, Jodi said, she was going to live in the Lacsons' home. "But we won't be together. Pampi has to work in the US and I will work here. He's okay with my staying in show biz. Even my father-in-law is not against it."

And what was the elder Lacson's advice to the couple? "This may sound cheesy," Jodi said, "but he told us to love each other and not do things that would hurt each other."

Jodi said a mutual friend introduced Pampi to her four years ago. "It started with group dates. Once I invited him to our house, and he came to meet my family. That's how I knew he was serious."

(Jodi co-hosts "Perfect Moments," a reality makeover show, with Angel Jacob and Rosanne Prieto every Sunday at 11 a.m. The show is a co-production of Pond's and ABS-CBN.)

If that was …

From page A28

the US and not run back to the Philippines."

So what's next?

"I'm just glad that she has a good team of lawyers behind her," Abunda said, referring to Sherwin Edelberg and Claire Espina, who are preparing the defense. Espina is Filipino-American; Abunda describes her as "brilliant."

Norie Sayo, Aunor's manager, expressed extreme confidence in Edelberg and Espina in a statement e-mailed to Inquirer Entertainment: "We know [they] will protect Nora's interests to ensure she meets with justice and fairness."

In the meantime, Aunor is being shielded from the media, a close associate volunteered, as part of "a legal strategy."

Still, Aunor has managed to relay messages to friends and admirers back home.

A devoted colleague of hers told INQUIRER: "The first time I talked to her by phone after the incident, she kept saying, '*Wala akong kasalanan* (I am innocent).' And she ended up comforting me, saying she was okay, we shouldn't worry, friends were helping her."

Nightmarish

Abunda said he was "not blind" to criticisms that Aunor had "self-destructive" tendencies. "However, at this time, I believe she doesn't deserve cruelty. But don't get me wrong. It seems to me (after interviewing Sayo on his Sunday show, "The Buzz") that Nora is not asking for pity. She is merely asking for our prayers, our compassion, our understanding. What happened is no joke; it's nightmarish!"

Needless to say, it's hard to ignore that, with this latest misadventure, Aunor has once again hooked the fickle Filipino public's attention. The series of unfortunate events in LA is but the latest cliffhanger in her tumultuous life story, which has oft been likened to a long-running soap opera.

In the mean time, her handlers have deemed it in order to announce that the scheduled concert tour would push through. Also, followers are set to launch a book of testimonials titled, "*Si Nora Aunor sa mga Noranian: Mga Paggunita at Pagtatapat* (Nora Aunor to Noranians: Remembrances and Revelations)."

Yes, the show must go on and it will, because the *chismis*-loving multitudes are once more riveted.

SAHARA

Hollywood's first mega-budgeted summer movie arrives tomorrow

Matthew McConaughey in 'SAHARA'

Hollywood's first mega-budgeted summer movie arrives in theaters tomorrow.

SAHARA is based on the popular book by **Clive Cussler** who is internationally acknowledged as the Grand Master of the American action/adventure novel. Cussler's books are published in more than 40 languages in more than 100 countries with a readership of more than 120 million avid fans.

Cussler recently optioned all 14 of his novels featuring **Dirk Pitt®** to **Paramount Pictures / Crusader Entertainment** with script and casting approval,

Cussler blend of high adventure and high technology, generally involving megalomaniacal villains, lost ships, and sunken treasure.

Like those of **Michael Crichton** are examples of techno-thrillers that do not use military plots and settings. Where Crichton strives for scrupulous realism, however, Cussler prefers fantastic spectacles and outlandish plot devices. The Pitt novels, in particular, have the anything-goes quality of the James Bond or Indiana Jones story.

Cussler guards his characters well. It took a good number of years and negotiations to bring Dirt Pitt to the screen. Still, Cussler had to resort to suing **Paramount Pictures / Crusader Entertainment**, because the writers changed key aspects of his characters, like allowing the girl to save the day, which he strictly forbade. Nothing can, nor should, take away from Pitt.

Filmed at a cost of over **$125M**, **Sahara** is the first of the summer's mega budgeted popcorn flicks from Hollywood. •

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11 BE COOL
12 MILLION DOLLAR BABY

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6 BUNSHINSABA
7 HOSTAGE
8 HITCH

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2 RESERVED
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4 BAHAY NI LOLA 2
5 HOSTAGE
6 THE FINAL CUT
7 RESERVED
8 CURSED

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3 SON OF THE MASK 2
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7 HOSTAGE
8 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
9 HITCH
10 BOOGEYMAN

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 BE COOL
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 THE PACIFIER
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5 CLOSER
6 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
7 HIDE AND SEEK

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 HOSTAGE
3 BOOGEYMAN
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
5 THE PACIFIER
6 CLOSER
7 HIDE AND SEEK
8 CONSTANTINE

NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 BE COOL
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 HIDE AND SEEK
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5 ALONE IN THE DARK
6 CLOSER
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

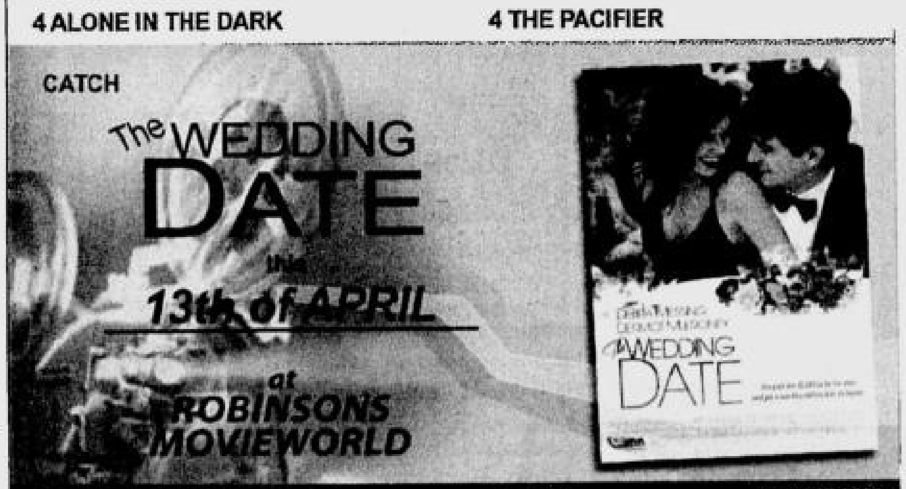
1 THE PACIFIER
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 HIDE AND SEEK
4 CLOSER

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 ROOM SERVICE
2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
3 SON OF THE MASK 2
4 ALONE IN THE DARK

CAINTA
240-4681

1 HOSTAGE
2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 HIDE AND SEEK
4 THE PACIFIER



STA. ROSA
(049) 837-0907

1 BE COOL
2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 HOSTAGE
4 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD
5 ROBOTS

LIPA
(043) 757-3664
(043) 312-5870

1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 CURSED
3 CONFIDENCE
4 BAHAY NI LOLA 2
5 NANG NAK

DASMARIÑAS
(046) 852-2125
(046) 416-4332

1 THE PACIFIER
2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 5 CHILDREN AND IT
4 ALONE IN THE DARK
5 HOSTAGE

ANGELES
(045) 892-2348

1 CONFIDENCE
2 CURSED
3 HOSTAGE
4 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD

IMUS
(046) 875-3838
(046) 471-8188

1 THE PACIFIER
2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 CLOSER
4 HOSTAGE
5 ALONE IN THE DARK
6 HIDE AND SEEK

STARMILLS
(045) 875-1927
(045) 961-5270

1 ALONE IN THE DARK
2 CURSED
3 HOSTAGE
4 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD
5 NANG NAK
6 HAROLD AND KUMAR

BACOLOD
(034) 441-[illegible]
(034) 441-[illegible]

1 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
2 HOSTAGE
3 HITCH
4 BAHAY NI LOLA 2
5 NANG NAK
6 SON OF THE MASK 2

ILOILO
(033) 336-8070

1 HITCH
2 HOSTAGE
3 THE FINAL CUT
4 CURSED
5 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
6 BAHAY NI LOLA 2

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Embassy of Finland Event
April 8-9, 2005

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at REP's GLOBE THEATER for the Month of April
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Cinema				
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE PACIFIER	2 HIDE & SEEK	3 MS. CONGENIALITY 2	4 CLOSER
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS	2 THE PACIFIER	3 THX CLOSER GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 BOOGEYMAN	5 BE COOL	6 HIDE & SEEK	7 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 THE PACIFIER	2 HIDE & SEEK		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX CLOSER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HIDE & SEEK GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 MS. CONGENIALITY 2 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE PACIFIER GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HIDE & SEEK	2 CLOSER		
	3 THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS	4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2	5 THE PACIFIER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SPANGLISH	2 CONFIDENCE	3 RAISING STRIPES	4 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

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Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
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⑥ Closer
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April 10, 2005, 4 - 5pm
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Reader Survey

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GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	**CLOSER**	10:50, 1:10, 3:35 6:00, 8:25, 10:50	R-13
2	**SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS THE MOVIE**	11:55, 2:15, 4:50, 6:50, 8:50, 10:50	GP
3	**PACIFIER**	10:50, 1:15, 3:30 6:05, 8:30, 10:55	GP
4	**HIDE AND SEEK**	10:35, 1:05, 4:35 6:05, 8:35, 11:00	PG-13

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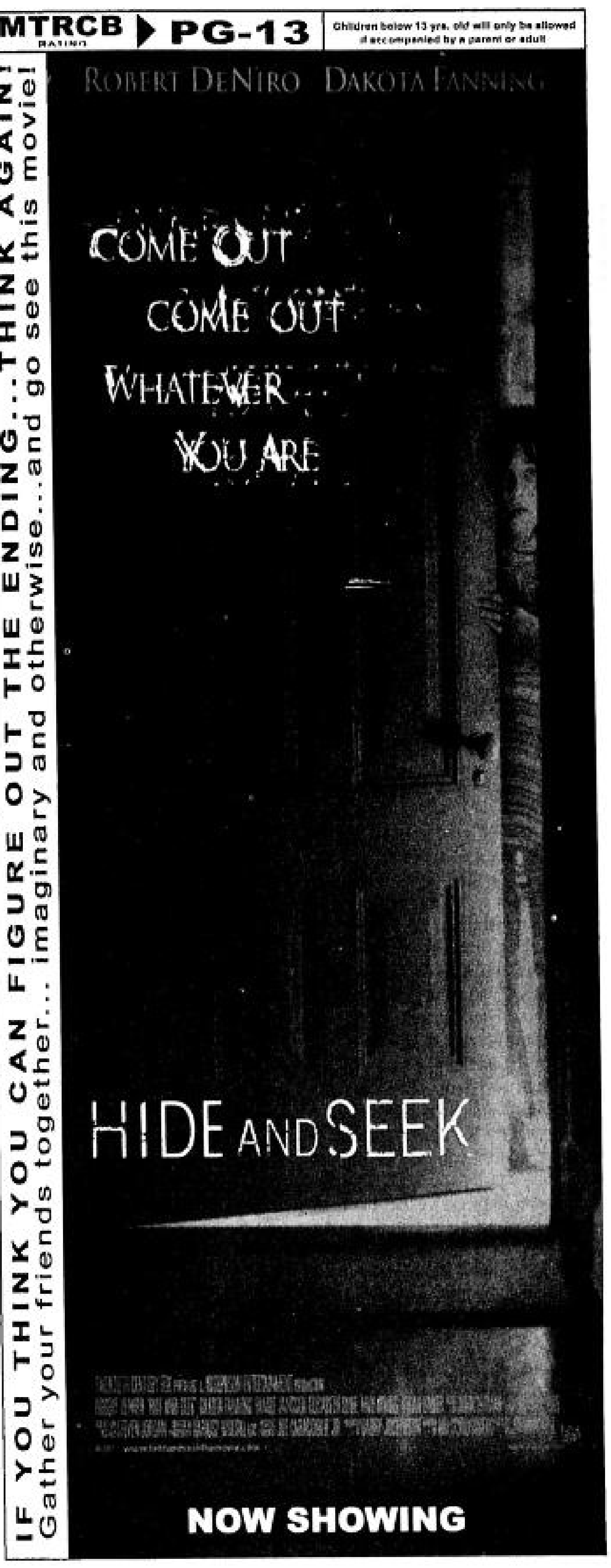
BE COOL **PG13** 12:15,2:45,5:15,7:45,10:15	**SPONGEBOB SQUARE PANTS MOVIE** **GP** 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00	**THE PACIFIER** **GP** 1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:10
HIDE AND SEEK **PG13** 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	**MISS CONGENIALITY 2** **PG13** 12:10,2:35,5:00,7:25,9:50	**CLOSER** **R13** 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10



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IF YOU THINK YOU CAN FIGURE OUT THE ENDING...THINK AGAIN!
Gather your friends together... imaginary and otherwise...and go see this movie!

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COME OUT
COME OUT
WHATEVER...
YOU ARE

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OPENS TOMORROW

THE FIRST BIG SUMMER MOVIE OF 2005
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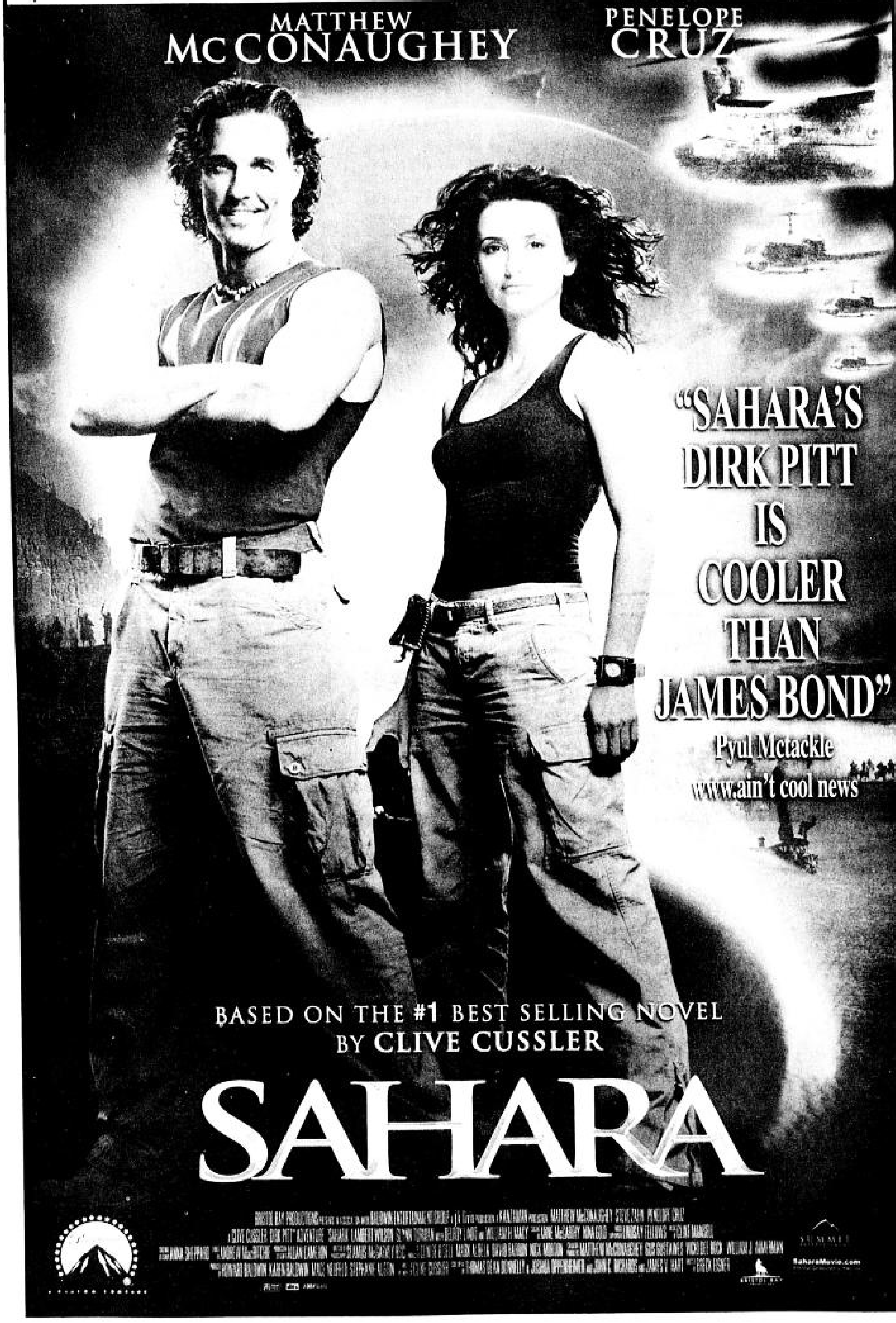

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VINCE VAUGHN CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER
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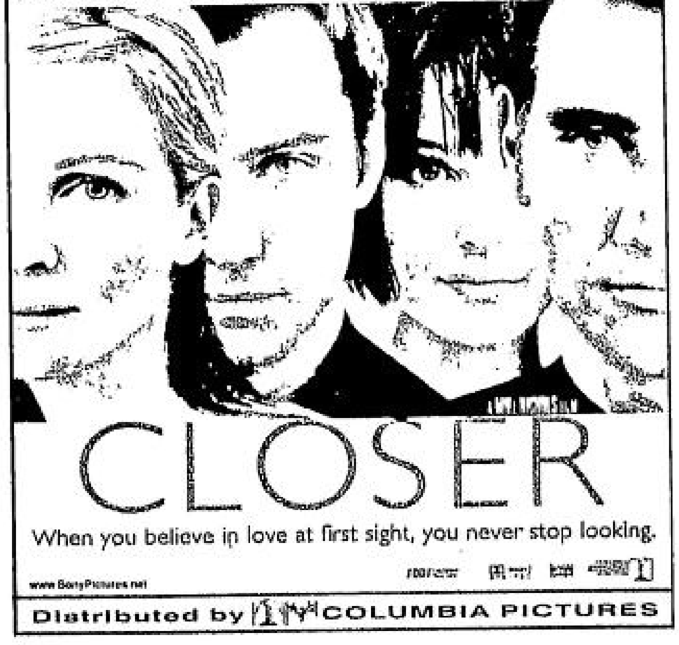

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If that was a joke, no one's laughing

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Contributor

Noranians are steadfast in the face of negative feedback about their idol's latest misadventure

"I WOULDN'T know whether to hug her or scold her," TV host Boy Abunda said when asked how he would conduct himself next time he came face to face with his longtime friend Nora Aunor.

The actress was arrested at the Los Angeles airport on March 30 on "suspicion of contraband possession." Authorities reportedly found prohibited drugs and paraphernalia in her personal belongings.

In fact, Abunda said, the first time he got the news via SMS, he had dismissed it as "a sick ... April Fools joke." After all, he recalled, there was the Aga Muhlach car crash hoax a few days before.

But no one laughed, especially when the story landed on the front pages of major local dailies. Like other certified Noranians, Abunda's initial reaction was to "be in denial."

They could hardly be blamed. When it came to urban legends, Aunor could still upstage even younger rumor-mill regulars, including Kris Aquino and Gretchen Barretto.

Ron Masayda, a PR practitioner and staunch supporter of the actress, made frantic calls to friends in the US. "I can't believe she would do something as careless and stupid as that, when she's trying to apply for a Green Card," Masayda said.

Aunor is reportedly applying for an 01 visa, a status "designated for aliens of extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business or athletics."

Actress Gina Alajar was given such a visa in 1998.

Citing "sensational" media reports, another Aunor fan fumed, "Why would she endanger all her prospects in the US for eight grams of shabu?"

Indeed, Noranians find it easier to subscribe to a conspiracy theory. They said their idol, Philippine cinema's eternal beloved underdog, was "being framed by powerful people she had irked in the last election."

A source in the actress' inner circle admitted this was pure conjecture. "But we heard from Filipinos in LA that before she entered the airport security area, she was talking to strangers who had introduced themselves as fans. And they said one of those people handed Nora the items that got her in trouble."

That's scenario no. 1.

The "Superstar" has critics, too, unfortunately, who are starting to think the incident and subsequent frenzy were just a "gimmick" to drum up her forthcoming US concerts—in Reno, LA, Las Vegas, New Jersey, and Virginia Beach.

"That's silly," Masayda insisted. "It's not wise at all to trifle with the American justice system. I admire her for deciding to face the music in

IF THAT/ A25

Jodi: We never tried to hide our wedding

By Marinel R. Cruz

"I NEVER kept our wedding plans a secret. Whenever I was asked, I answered. I'm just not the type to offer information," declared young actress Jodi Sta. Maria, who surprised her fans and colleagues when she married the son of Sen. Panfilo Lacson in Las Vegas on Easter Sunday.

Jodi, 23, an exclusive talent of ABS-CBN, and Panfilo "Pampi" Lacson Jr., 25, were wed in the chapel of the posh Mandalay Bay hotel.

"I didn't deny that we were thinking of getting married," Jodi told a group of entertainment writers on Tuesday. "As soon as Pampi and I were sure, I discussed it with my ABS-CBN bosses They were very supportive."

Jodi's contract with Star Magic, the network's talent center, expires in 2007.

Few guests

"I wanted the occasion to be very, very private —just for family and our closest friends," the actress added. "Besides, I don't think people would have come to Las Vegas, even if I had invited them. It wasn't *magarbo* (lavish). We had less than 100 guests."

Jodi stressed that she was not pregnant, and

JODI/ A25

ABS-CBN to GMA 7: Stop practice of irresponsible journalism

ABS-CBN Channel 2 has sent a formal letter of complaint to the Professional Artist Managers Inc. (Pami), protesting what the network said was "irresponsible journalism" as practiced by rival network GMA 7.

In a letter to Pami president June Rufino, the Kapamilya network said GMA 7's show biz show "StarTalk" aired parts of a sex video and "blatantly named" ABS-CBN contract star Piolo Pascual as one of the participants.

Senior vice president for Star Magic (ABS-CBN talent center) Johnny Manahan signed the protest letter dated April 4, 2005 in which he said: "Although ['Startalk'] gave Mr. Pascual the benefit of the doubt by saying ... there is no certainty that he is the one in the video, serious damage has been done because [the show] made very grave insinuations. We have reviewed the alleged video and are certain that the person they are pointing [to] is not Mr. Pascual."

Where's the mole?

The video features two males in intercourse while another person is recording it. The talk show report said the one wearing a necklace could be Pascual.

Star Magic PR chief Rikka Dylim told INQUIRER Entertainment on Tuesday: "[That] man does not ... have a mole on the face like Piolo's. Also, if you've seen Piolo's fashion pictorials, you will see that his belly button is not the same as that man's."

Manahan said his network was "seeking the assistance" of Pami in initiating action against GMA 7 and the offending show.

"We are aware and are in full support of your campaign against unethical journalism," he said. "What transpired is another concrete example of an entertainment talk show's neglect of . . . ethical standards just to come up with a scoop."

The network has also sent a letter of complaint to the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, according to Dylim. "This will be our crusade from now on," she said. "ABS-CBN Star Magic condemns ... irresponsible journalism."

Manahan said they were "studying legal options." *Marinel R. Cruz*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Thursday, April 7, 2005

SINO ANG BABANGGA SA GINEBRA?
PBA
ABC Iba tayo
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE
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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Gatekeepers (5:10 PM)	Gundam Seed (5:35 PM)	The Road To Stardom	TV Patrol		Spirits	Krystala	Hiram	Save The Last Dance	Til Death Do Us Part	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
NBN		Taiwan Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival					
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA			PBA		Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	Sakal
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joyride	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knock Out	Tyker Hungry Heart	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin		Full House	Stairway To Heaven	Magpakailanman			
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Score Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		The Hope 1-Million All Filipino					IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		WWE Smackdown				Mutant League	Heavy Gear	Maxsteel	Avengers	Stargate SG1		Thunder Box		JAG					
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Jeannie, Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang				Relasyon				Hanggang Kaya Kong Lumaban				Babae Sa Bintana				Ikaw Lang	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model			Miss Match		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		The Contender		When Animals Attack		The Amazing Race		7 Days (Season III)		Pensacola		Canon AXN Xtreme	Now See This	Lost		The Contender		The World's Scariest Explosions Caught On The Tape	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	The Chronicle News From The Edge/The Simple Life 2	Arrested Development	The Apprentice			American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	CNN Business Traveller	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Frontiers Of Construction		Explorations Powered By Duracell		Evolution		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Frontiers Of Construction: Pipe Dream/ Moving The Monsters/Defying Gravity		Explorations Powered By Duracell	
Solar Sports				Boxing Vargas vs. Jokol				ATP Open 13 '05 Finals Ancic vs. Ljubicic				GWS Ep.13-2005	NBA TV Daily	NBA Game Washington @ Detroit					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO	Into the Night				Miss Lettie And Me (4:20 PM)			City By The Sea (6:50 PM)			When In Rome (7:35 PM)			The Big One 2 Fast 2 Furious			How To Deal (10:45PM)		
Star Movies	The Eliminator			Psycho			Tooth (5:45 PM)			A Guy Thing (7:15 PM)				EDTV				Detention (11:05PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	Int'l Volleyball			ESPN Great Outdoor Games				Uefa Champions League				Sportscenter Asia	Uefa Champions League					Goals!	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/ Unstuffable Bunny	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch/ Unstuffable Bunny				My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim		
Cinemax		Helen Of Troy (3:15 PM)				Julie Walking Home (5:15 PM)					3 Ninjas Kick Back			Contagious			Blue Crush		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA, The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Strong Medicine		Wedding Daze			Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye (10:35PM)		The District (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Engineering		Ultimate Cars	Building The Ultimate	Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
Sports Plus	Bell South Classic Final Round						Search TV Ep.1 New Zealand	Raceworld		Italia Serie A highlights 10		Italia Serie A				Nascar Food City 500 Bristol			
EWTN	A Christian Pilgrimage To Jordan	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Suffering Church	Angel Force	Children's Rosary	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	The Spirit Of Catholic Leadership	Saints: A Closer Look	EWTN Gallery	EWTN Live With Father Mitch Pacwa		Pope John Paul's Legacy To The Family	Council Of Faith	Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	Holy Spirit In The Church	The Journey Home	

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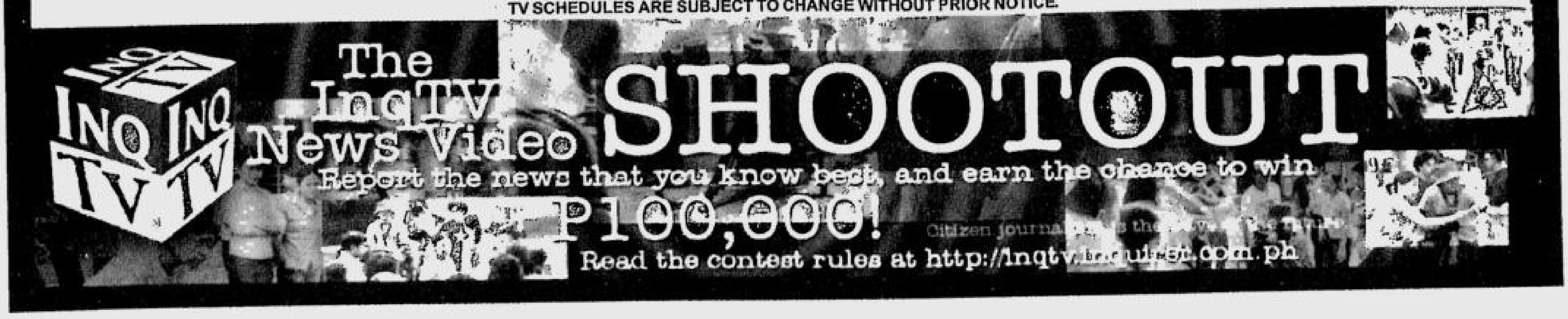
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But no one laughed, especially when the story landed on the front pages of major local dailies. Like other certified Noranians, Abunda's initial reaction was to "be in denial."

They could hardly be blamed. When it came to urban legends, Aunor could still upstage even younger rumor-mill regulars, including Kris Aquino and Gretchen Barretto.

Ron Masayda, a PR practitioner and staunch supporter of the actress, made frantic calls to friends in the US. "I can't believe she would do something as careless and stupid as that, when she's trying to apply for a Green Card," Masayda said.

Aunor is reportedly applying for an 01 visa, a status "designated for aliens of extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business or athletics."

Actress Gina Alajar was given such a visa in 1998.

Citing "sensational" media reports, another Aunor fan fumed, "Why would she endanger all her prospects in the US for eight grams of shabu?"

Indeed, Noranians find it easier to subscribe to a conspiracy theory. They said their idol, Philippine cinema's eternal beloved underdog, was "being framed by powerful people she had irked in the last election."

A source in the actress' inner circle admitted this was pure conjecture. "But we heard from Filipinos in LA that before she entered the airport security area, she was talking to strangers who had introduced themselves as fans. And they said one of those people handed Nora the items that got her in trouble."

That's scenario no. 1.

The "Superstar" has critics, too, unfortunately, who are starting to think the incident and subsequent frenzy were just a "gimmick" to drum up her forthcoming US concerts—in Reno, LA, Las Vegas, New Jersey, and Virginia Beach.

"That's silly," Masayda insisted. "It's not wise at all to trifle with the American justice system. I admire her for deciding to face the music in

IF THAT/ A25

Jodi: We never tried to hide our wedding

By Marinel R. Cruz

"I NEVER kept our wedding plans a secret. Whenever I was asked, I answered. I'm just not the type to offer information," declared young actress Jodi Sta. Maria, who surprised her fans and colleagues when she married the son of Sen. Panfilo Lacson in Las Vegas on Easter Sunday.

Jodi, 23, an exclusive talent of ABS-CBN, and Panfilo "Pampi" Lacson Jr., 25, were wed in the chapel of the posh Mandalay Bay hotel.

"I didn't deny that we were thinking of getting married," Jodi told a group of entertainment writers on Tuesday. "As soon as Pampi and I were sure, I discussed it with my ABS-CBN bosses They were very supportive."

Jodi's contract with Star Magic, the network's talent center, expires in 2007.

Few guests

"I wanted the occasion to be very, very private—just for family and our closest friends," the actress added. "Besides, I don't think people would have come to Las Vegas, even if I had invited them. It wasn't *magarbo* (lavish). We had less than 100 guests."

Jodi stressed that she was not pregnant, and

JODI/ A25

ABS-CBN to GMA 7: Stop practice of irresponsible journalism

ABS-CBN Channel 2 has sent a formal letter of complaint to the Professional Artist Managers Inc. (Pami), protesting what the network said was "irresponsible journalism" as practiced by rival network GMA 7.

In a letter to Pami president June Rufino, the Kapamilya network said GMA 7's show biz show "StarTalk" aired parts of a sex video and "blatantly named" ABS-CBN contract star Piolo Pascual as one of the participants.

Senior vice president for Star Magic (ABS-CBN talent center) Johnny Manahan signed the protest letter dated April 4, 2005 in which he said: "Although ['Startalk'] gave Mr. Pascual the benefit of the doubt by saying ... there is no certainty that he is the one in the video, serious damage has been done because [the show] made very grave insinuations. We have reviewed the alleged video and are certain that the person they are pointing [to] is not Mr. Pascual."

Where's the mole?

The video features two males in intercourse while another person is recording it. The talk show report said the one wearing a necklace could be Pascual.

Star Magic PR chief Rikka Dylim told Inquirer Entertainment on Tuesday: "[That] man does not ... have a mole on the face like Piolo's. Also, if you've seen Piolo's fashion pictorials, you will see that his belly button is not the same as that man's."

Manahan said his network was "seeking the assistance" of Pami in initiating action against GMA 7 and the offending show.

"We are aware and are in full support of your campaign against unethical journalism," he said. "What transpired is another concrete example of an entertainment talk show's neglect of . . . ethical standards just to come up with a scoop."

The network has also sent a letter of complaint to the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, according to Dylim. "This will be our crusade from now on," she said. "ABS-CBN Star Magic condemns ... irresponsible journalism."

Manahan said they were "studying legal options." *Marinel R. Cruz*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Thursday April 7, 2004

SINO ANG BABANGGA SA GINEBRA?
PBA
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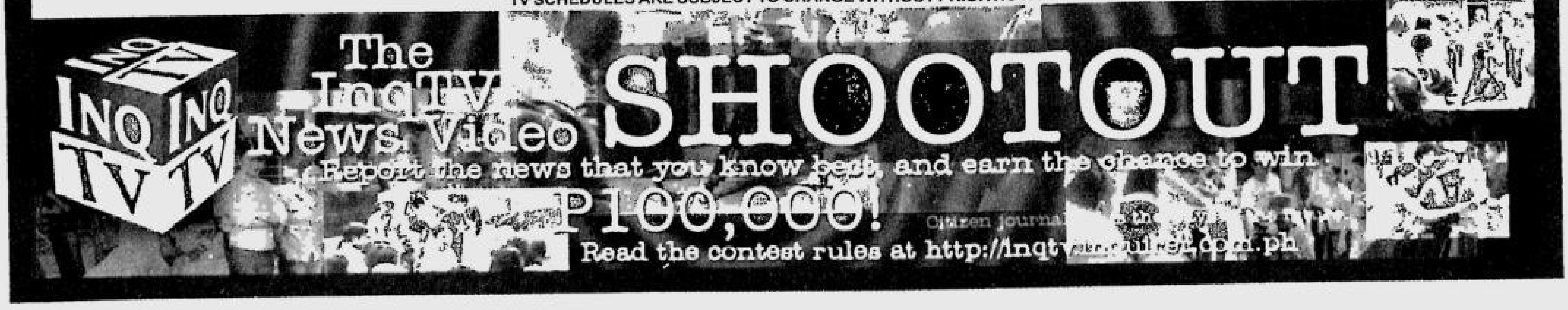
Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Gatekeepers (5:10 PM)	Gundam Seed (5:35 PM)	The Road To Stardom	TV Patrol		Spirits	Krystala	Hiram	Save The Last Dance	Til Death Do Us Part	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
NBN		Tawag Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival					
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA			PBA		Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joyride	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knock Out	Tyler Hungry Heart	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin		Full House	Starway To Heaven	Nagpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Scare Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		The Hope 1-Million All Filipino					IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		WWE Smackdown				Mutant League	Heavy Gear	Maxxtest	Avengers	Stargate SG1		Thunder Box		JAG					
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Jennie, Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang				Rotasyon				Hangga't Kaya Kong Lumaban				Babae Sa Bintana				Ikaw Lang	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model			Miss Match		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		The Contender		When Animals Attack		The Amazing Race		7 Days (Season III)		Pensacola		Cannon AXN Xtreme	New See This	Lost		The Contender		The World's Scariest Explosions Caught On The Tape	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	The Chronicle: News From The Edge/The Simple Life 2	Arrested Development	The Apprentice			American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	CNN Business Traveller	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations Powered By Duracell		Evolution		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Frontlines Of Construction: Pipe Dreams/ Moving The Monsters/Defying Gravity		Explorations Powered By Duracell	
Solar Sports				Boxing: Vargas vs. Javier				ATP Open 13'05 Finals: Ancic vs. Ljubicic				GWS Ep 13-2005	NBA TV Daily	NBA Game Washington @ Detroit					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO	Into the Night				Miss Lettie And Me (4:20 PM)			City By The Sea (5:50 PM)			When In Rome (7:35 PM)			The Big One 2 Fast 2 Furious			How To Deal (10:45PM)		
Star Movies	The Eliminator			Psycho			Tooth (5:45PM)			A Guy Thing (7:15PM)				EDTV				Detention (11:05PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	Int'l Volleyball			ESPN Great Outdoor Games				Uefa Champions League				Sportscenter Asia	Uefa Champions League					Goals!	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/ Untalkative Bunny	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch/ Untalkative Bunny				My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Videos	According To Jim		
Cinemax		Helen Of Troy (3:15 PM)				Julie Walking Home (5:15 PM)					3 Ninja's Kick Back			Contagious			Blue Crush		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Strong Medicine		Wedding Daze			Sue Thomas: FB Eye (10:35PM)		The District (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Engineering		Ultimate Cars	Building The Ultimate	Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
Sports Plus	Bell South Classic Final Round						Search TV Ep.1 New Zealand	Racworld		Italia Serie A highlights 10		Italia Serie A				Nascar Food City 500 Bristol			
EWTN	A Christian Pilgrimage To Jordan	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Suffering Church	Angel Force	Children's Rosary	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	The Spirit Of Catholic Leadership	Saints: A Closer Look	EWTN Gallery	EWTN Live With Father Mitch Pacwa		Pope John Paul's Legacy To The Family	Council Of Faith	Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	Holy Spirit In The Church	The Journey Home	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



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Editor **Raul O. Marcelo**
Assistant Editor **Corrie S. Narisma**
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ADB trims growth outlook for RP to 5%

SMC raises bid for Aussie dairy firm

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN Miguel Corp. raised its bid for Australian dairy firm National Foods Ltd. to A$1.9 billion from A$1.78 billion, topping the offer of the other bidder, New Zealand's Fonterra Co-operative Group Ltd.

In a disclosure to the Australian Stock Exchange, SMC said it had agreed to buy all the shares of National Foods at A$6.40 a share, up from its original offer of A$5.90.

The board of National Foods has asked shareholders to accept SMC's enhanced offer in the absence of a superior proposal.

SMC said its offer was higher by 40 cents than Fonterra's $6 a share for the acquisition of 50 percent of National Foods. For a block equivalent to 90 percent of National Foods, SMC's bid is 20 cents higher than Fonterra's revised A $6.20 a share offer.

SMC said its offer was at the high end of National Foods' own valuation of A$6.01-$6.55 a share. It also offers a premium of 40 cents to National Foods' closing price last Oct. 27, the day before Fonterra's takeover announcement.

SMC's bid is also equal to the highest price at which National Foods shares have ever been traded at the Australian

SMC/B2

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank expects the Philippine economy to expand by only 5 percent this year, down from last year's 15-year high growth rate of 6.1 percent, in view of the projected weakening of global demand and decline in the country's agricultural output.

The bank, which released its annual flagship publication Asian Development Outlook (ADO) yesterday, also said the country's growth would likely stabilize at 5 percent yearly in the next three years, lagging behind the average expansion of developing Asia projected at 6.5 percent.

The 5-percent growth outlook for the Philippines was a downgrade from the previous ADO's 5.5 percent projection.

The ADO projected that from 7.3 percent last year, developing Asia—referring to the 42 developing countries in the region—would grow by an average of only 6.5 percent this year. The growth rate, it said, would likely rise to 7 percent next year and 7.2 percent in 2007.

Mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam are seen leading the region's growth.

Southeast Asia, which expanded by 6.3 percent last year, is seen growing by 5.4 percent this year, 5.6 percent next year and 5.9 percent in 2007. Southeast Asia is composed of the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Cambodia, Laos, Burma and Vietnam.

This year, Thailand is seen growing by 5.6 percent, Malaysia by 5.7 percent, Indonesia by 5.5 percent and Vietnam by 7.6 percent.

The 5-percent yearly growth projection of the ADB for the Philippines in the next three years was also much slower than the government's own targets. The government's medium-term Philippine development plan forecasts a growth of 5.3-6.3 percent for this year, 6.3-7.3 percent for next year and 6.5-7.5 percent for 2007.

While the Philippines has established a good platform for future performance, progress in fiscal consolidation would define economic prospects, said ADB country director Tom Crouch in a press briefing yesterday.

The ADO stressed that the public sector deficit remained the most significant macro-economic imbalance due to its impact on debt sustainability.

"The system is unable to fully mobilize revenues, whether through taxes, tariffs, fees or charges," the report said, explaining why the government always had to resort to more borrowings.

"Another reason for the government's fiscal vulnerability stems from the high level of contingent liabilities, primarily from underwriting the finances of government corporations (including some financial institutions) and the public pension system," it added.

Another factor behind the projected slowdown of economic growth is the expected decline in agriculture output due to unfavorable weather forecasts for the next three years.

The farm sector, which contributes a fifth of total economic output and employs more than a third of the total workforce, is expected to expand by only 4 percent yearly in the next three years, lower than the 4.9-percent growth in 2004.

Crouch explained that the country was benefiting from strong growth in exports, overseas worker remittances and agriculture, expansion of fixed capital, reduction in fiscal imbalance, buoyant intra-regional trade as

ADB/B2

PIC lines up ₱30B worth of infra projects

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Development Corp.-Philippine Infrastructure Corp. has lined up four new road projects worth P30 billion as part of its portfolio of priority projects that are seen to boost economic development.

A source said the projects included the P12-billion Eastern North Luzon Expressway, which would run parallel to NLEX from Sta. Rita, Bulacan, to San Jose City, Nueva Ecija.

Another project is the 21-kilometer, P9-billion Calabarzon expressway that is meant to decongest the Aguinaldo highway that links Metro Manila to the Southern Tagalog provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon.

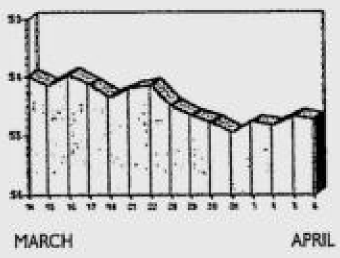
Two other projects are the extension of the

PIC/B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 54.72 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., April 6, 2005

¥ 108.06 = $ 1

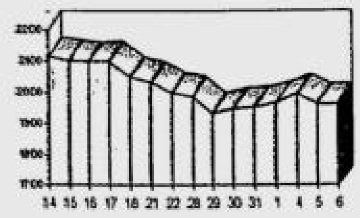
As of 5 p.m., April 6, 2005

GOLD: $426.10-426.60

per ounce Hong Kong, April 6, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks end flat

SHARES closed flat yesterday, capping a listless session beset by a dearth in fresh buying incentives and caution ahead of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' monthly rate-setting meeting, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 0.32 point at 1,962.38, adding to Tuesday's 1.6 percent loss. The index traded between 1,954.31 and 1,970.25 points.

Weighing on the main index were SM Prime, which fell 3.8 percent to P7.70, and Globe Telecom, which lost 0.6 percent to P875.

The sell-off, however, wasn't broad based, with gainers ahead of decliners 41 to 28. Traders said bargain hunters took advantage of the tepid mood in the market to position in value stocks such as Philippine

STOCKS/B3

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Beach and pieces

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WHAT is inflation? Who invented it? Will it bring about the collapse of modern civilization? And can it really make my hair grow?

These are just a few of the questions in the mind of business nowadays, as headlines scream about the inflation rate being dangerously high for two consecutive months now.

Last month, for instance, the inflation rate went up to what newspaper headline writers refer to as "the high side."

The inflation rate was recorded at 8.5 percent in March and in February this year. That was supposed to be the "high side."

In the 1980s, actually, we saw inflation rates of more than 50 percent.

* * *

WHEN headlines scream about inflation, businessmen naturally think of dangerous times ahead.

For one, high inflation can mean high interest rates. They are bad for business.

But really now, I am not too sure about the increase in interest rates, at this point, as the best way to bring down the inflation rate.

Okay, I know that for a long, long time, our government has been wrestling with high inflation, employing high interest rates as the sidekick.

There is such a thing as "headline" inflation, nevertheless, and I am not too sure if, really, the headline inflation these days had a lot to do with interest rate policies.

We can surely trace a portion of the inflation rate to fiscal and monetary policies. You know—how well this cute administration manages its finances.

That's a small portion of the "high side" inflation. The increase actually had a lot to do with the high prices of oil, now at their highest level ever.

No wonder, the Bangko Sentral is careful about tinkering with interest rates. We all know that high interest rates are deadly.

High rates can lead to bankruptcies. Moreover, as we saw in the 1980s, they can topple a regime. Bad business climate makes for a restive population. Watch out!

* * *

FROM bits and pieces of information in business, I gathered that three members of the Bangko Sentral's policy making Monetary Board are retiring soon.

I heard that Malacañang already has a couple of names for their replacement.

They are Nely Villafuerte, wife of Gov. Luis Villafuerte from Bicol, and former Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong.

Nobody knows the extent of their experience in making monetary policies, but some in business think that their appointment has something to do with politics.

That's how this cute administration plans to solve the problem of the inflation rate. It is making so-so appointments to the Monetary Board.

To sort of compensate for the political decision, Malacañang asked one of the three retiring board members to stay.

He happens to be a banker. With the two other new appointments, and the retirement of Gov. Rafael "Tito Paeng" Buenaventura, the poor guy will be the only banker left in the Monetary Board.

No wonder, he refused the offer from Malacañang. We have a term down here in my barangay for what, if he accepted it, his role will be in board—*balagoong*.

* * *

THEY say that one road project alone, the Cavite coastal road, is stirring the development of huge pieces of beach properties in Batangas and Cavite.

I know that Sta. Lucia, for instance, just bought a huge property in front of the Cavite Export Processing Zone.

Tatang Henry Sy's SM group, according to the grapevine, is putting up another SM mall (i.e. huge) somewhere in Cavite.

The coastal road extension, you see, will cut the travel time from Manila to the place called Hacienda Looc, from more than three hours to about one and a half hours.

That should explain the interest in real estate along the coast of Cavite and Batangas.

Right now there are a few beachfront property developments in Cavite and Batangas, including the 5,750-hectare Hacienda Looc.

The others are Cresta Grande in Cavite, and Punta Fuego, Kawayan Cove, and Canyon Woods in Batangas—all high-end beachfront developments.

Now, Punta Fuego captured the imagination of the market through its packaging, although it hardly has any beachfront. The rich have weekend houses there.

* * *

ANYWAY, interest in the real estate development along the coast of Cavite and Batangas may not be limited to tourist resorts or weekend getaways for the rich.

If the coastal road extension can cut travel time by half, the development can actually shift to residential lots.

Well, as the marketing line of those projects go, the air is clean, the scenery is immaculate, and who wants to live here in Manila, which is dirty and polluted, anyway?

Moreover, big names in real estate are now involved in the development there. Let me give you one name: Henry Sy.

Tatang's SM Investments owns a company called Manila Southcoast, which owns—what else—Hacienda Looc.

As an aside, for the recent SM Investment listing, the entire Sy family went to the PSE. Sisters Tessie Coson-Sy and Elizabeth Sy, and their brother Herbert went to the Makati trading floor. Tatang and sons Henry Jr., Hans, and Harley went to the Tektite trading floor.

That's how serious the SM group is about SM Investment. The entire Sy family attended the listing ceremonies, and it never happened before.

* * *

BY the way, a study made by the foreign consulting firm Macquarie Research showed that Hacienda Looc is the centerpiece of SM Investment's real estate portfolio.

The study said that with an area of about 5,750 hectares, that property alone dwarfs the collective land-banking of the largest property developers in the whole country.

Moreover, Hacienda Looc has a long coastline of some 31 kilometers of near white sand—with some 13 coves, at that.

The research firm also said therefore that, for the Hacienda Looc project this year, it assumes a "initial sell-out" of the membership club shares.

Now, the one who brought the property into the SM real estate development ambit was Luis Coson, the late husband of Tessie Sy, the eldest child of Tatang.

With Tatang now semi-retired, Tessie is said to be the one running the SM show. Hacienda Looc must figure prominently in the group's real estate plans.

* * *

NOW, I heard that the most active construction activity is in Ternate, a coastal town in Cavite, in a project called Cresta Grande. Its brochure says individual lot titles are already available.

Cresta Grande is owned and is being developed by Cala Paniman. The president is Martin Chan.

If the name sounds familiar, it's because Martin Chan is the brother of Luis Coson, the late husband of Tessie Sy, who is running the SM show.

Ternate is some 60 km from Manila, or one and a half hours drive, even without the coastal road extension. Imagine what the extension project can do!

ALI to invest ₱3.2B in leisure deal

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

REAL-ESTATE giant Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) is investing at least P3.2 billion in its first leisure project dubbed "Anvaya Cove," a 320-hectare residential-resort community overlooking the beach and mountainside in Morong, Bataan.

ALI officials said after its recent stockholders' meeting that the company increased its budget for project expenditures this year to P13.6 billion, following increased cash flow and opportunities in the real estate sector.

The planned capital outlay is 68 percent more than the P8.1 billion ALI spent last year.

The leisure project forms part of the company's capex for the year, which will be largely spent on residential and townhouse projects, construction of malls and business process outsourcing (BPO) facilities and residential subdivisions.

"The way that we look at it, we would like to capture as much of the spending that people have on real estate products. We haven't had a product in the leisure area before, so some of our customers were actually spending on other areas," ALI president Jaime Ayala said.

He said Anvaya, which is Sanskrit for "family," will be a second home to people who want a weekend retreat in Subic.

Early this year, ALI partnered with Subic Bay Development and Industrial Estate Corp. (Sudeco) to jointly develop the high-end seaside resort community which is a few minutes away from the southern gate of Subic Bay and a few kilometers off Subic's Ocean Adventure and jungle reserve.

"We feel that the Subic area has some critical mass or momentum in terms of amenities and the things you can do when you go there. In addition to everything you can do inside the community, when you go outside (of the community), there is so much to do," Ayala said.

Anvaya will be put up in three phases.

ALI is already securing the necessary licenses from government housing agencies to sell lots in Anvaya.

It plans to launch this project by the middle of June this year.

To continue strengthening its balance sheet, ALI has disposed of non-core assets, including its stake in the LRT-3 project, which brought in P5 billion to its coffers over the last three years.

ALI is also set to launch its 200,000-square-meter North Triangle mall in Quezon City by 2007.

ALI has completed the bidding for certain construction work processes for the P3-billion mall project and is set to start construction next month.

Ayala also said ALI remains "cautiously optimistic" in its outlook for the property market, with growth driven by the BPO business, consumer spending, and further boosted by improved interest rates and demand from overseas Filipino workers.

U-BIX, Konika Minolta sign distributorship deal

U-BIX Corp., the country's leading office equipment distributor, was appointed exclusive distributor of Konica Minolta copiers in the Philippines starting this month.

The deal followed the merger between Konica Corp. and Minolta Co. Ltd., which led to the birth of a new corporation, Konica Minolta Business Technologies Inc., in October 2003.

The distributorship agreement was signed last April 5 by U-BIX chair and CEO Edilberto B. Bravo and Ko Hasegawa, general manager of Konica Minolta Business Technologies.

"Konica Minolta has chosen U-BIX because of its 31-year track record as a leading distributor of office equipment in the Philippines," Hasegawa said.

Before the merger, U-BIX was the exclusive distributor of Konica copiers for 31 years. Since 1974, U-BIX and Konica have successfully worked to achieve market dominance in the Philippine market for copying machines.

Bravo said the local copier market was expected to grow by 15-20 percent this year.

From distributing Konica copiers in 1974, U-BIX expanded its product lines to include Epson printers, scanners and LCD projectors, Riso digital duplicators, Okamura office furniture systems, Brother office equipment, and Casio projectors.

The company has also ventured into the outsourcing business with its exclusive US master franchise agreements with Service Master facilities management services, Terminix termite and pest control services, and Merry Maids home cleaning devices.

ADB trims growth . . .

From page B1

well as bullish stock market and peso trading.

However, he said there were vulnerabilities arising from slower import growth, high unemployment, stronger inflationary pressures and growing government debt.

Crouch said demand for Philippine exports would likewise be affected by the slower expansion of industrialized countries, which would likely grow by only 4 percent yearly during the three-year period compared to 5.3 percent in 2004.

The ADB expects Philippine exports to grow by only 7-8 percent compared to 9.6 percent last year as the global economy softens and international competition intensifies. Growth in Philippine imports is also seen slowing down to 5.5-6.5 percent from 10.6 percent last year.

"Given the high import content of Philippine exports, if there's a slowdown of imports, there's a possibility that exports will also slow down," Crouch said.

The ADO also expected the Philippine inflation rate to creep up to 5.5-6.5 percent this year due to persistently high oil prices as well as increases in wages and transport costs.

Another major challenge cited was the country's high unemployment rate, which at an average of 11.8 percent in 2004 was one of the highest among Southeast Asian countries.

High unemployment, the ADO pointed out, remained the country's single clearest indicator of a weak economy.

"The number of workers joining the labor market in most years exceeds the number of jobs created," the report said, noting that the economy needed to create about one million fresh jobs each year to absorb these new entrants.

Another concern cited was the country's high debt payments. If left unchecked, the ADO warned that the government would experience lower expenditures, further credit-rating deterioration, declining public services as well as trigger a significant peso depreciation.

PIC lines up . . .

From page B1

yet-to-be-built Subic-Clark-Tarlac expressway to Pangasinan, and the 10-kilometer Circumferential Road 6 that would serve as a bypass along the Manggahan floodway in Pasig City.

The source said feasibility studies were being done and approvals from the National Economic Development Authority were expected within the year.

NDC-PIC, according to then Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima, was put up to jump start infrastructure development projects that will help attract new investments and help existing ones do better business in the country.

It is not clear where the funding for the four projects would come from but Purisima had said the company wanted to raise as much as P200 billion for some 10 major infrastructure projects, for which the NDC was earmarking P20 billion.

NDC is supposed to raise the money from its current resources as well as some other assets that would be transferred to the PIC from the Privatization Management Office.

Also, Purisima said additional funding would come from the Development Bank of the Philippines, which is also the PIC's financial adviser.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 6, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4.1	4	4.1	6,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank.	27.5	29	27.5	29	278,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	51.5	51.5	50	51.5	665,900
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.5	1,603,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	340,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47	47	46.5	46.5	38,000
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.5	76,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	34	34.5	33.5	34	385,000
Philippine National Bank	32	32	32	32	4,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	500
Security Bank Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	183,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	30	29	29.5	80,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	290	290	290	290	260
Manulife Financial Corp.	2510	2535	2510	2535	2,740
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	134,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	150	152	150	152	390,360
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1710	1720	1710	1720	550
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.24	1.24	2,853,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	880	880	875	875	56,720
Ipeople Inc.	4.45	4.5	4.4	4.5	106,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.35	2,420,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1400	1410	1395	1405	75,510
Ivantage Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	1,000,000
Philweb Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.02	161,700,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	18.25	18.25	18	18	5,300
Manila Electric Co. B	26	26.5	26	26	118,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.5	8,918,000
Petron Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.55	3.55	2,099,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.38	32,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.8	1.86	1.8	1.86	56,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7	7.1	7	7.1	1,374,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.52	220,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.61	0.66	0.61	0.64	2,110,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.6	3.7	3.55	3.7	202,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.65	3.7	3.65	3.65	25,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	34	35	34	35	12,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29	29.5	29	29	473,800
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	57	56	57	120,200
San Miguel Corp. B	81	82	81	82	2,800
Universal Robina Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	790,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	38,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.6	705,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.7	55,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.046	0.046	0.045	0.045	6,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.14	2.16	2.14	2.16	2,590,000
APC Group Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.39	1,040,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	160,000
Aries Prime Res. Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	96,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	15	16	15	16	14,500
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.15	0.15	1,100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.02	1.04	19,391,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	1,500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.4	280,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	1,000,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	9.7	9.7	9.3	9.4	172,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	52	52	51	51	126,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.0925	0.095	3,300,000
IPVG Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	12,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.65	3.5	3.5	210,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.32	1.36	7,532,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.47	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.46	12,210,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	290,000
SM Investments Corp.	235	249	235	247	2,373,370
South China Resources Inc	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.68	300,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.18	0.165	0.18	850,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	163,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	600,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	1,000,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.34	1.38	1.32	1.36	6,535,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.98	1	0.98	1	340,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	1,580,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25	407,800
ATS Corp. - Preferred	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	5,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series J	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.6	3,860,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	6,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	10,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,700,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	1,500,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	6,000,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.4	1.44	6,776,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	110,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	1,000,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.9	926,000
SM Development Corp.	1.78	1.8	1.76	1.76	15,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8	8	7.6	7.7	9,359,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	20,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	312,000
Benguet Corp. A	8.7	9.1	8.7	8.8	97,000
Benguet Corp. B	27	27	27	27	2,200
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	1,930,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.38	0.39	0.37	0.38	5,130,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	47,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	28,200,000
Omico Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	390,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.14	1,737,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.4	1.42	1.36	1.36	341,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	36	36.5	35.5	36	347,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.25	0.27	0.23	0.25	1,080,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.44	2.55	2.44	2.5	214,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.195	0.2	0.185	0.195	8,000,000

CURRENCIES

April 6, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.777061	1.000000	54.8090
Japan	Yen	0.007186	0.009248	0.5069
United Kingdom	Pound	1.461652	1.881000	103.0957
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.099629	0.128213	7.0272
Switzerland	Franc	0.644864	0.829876	45.4847
Canada	Dollar	0.638348	0.821490	45.0250
Singapore	Dollar	0.468081	0.602373	33.0155
Australia	Dollar	0.596180	0.767224	42.0508
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.061225	2.652590	145.3858
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.207217	0.266667	14.6158
Brunei	Dollar	0.466676	0.600565	32.9164
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000105	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.019647	0.025284	1.3858
UAE	Dirham	0.211577	0.272279	14.9233
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.286900	70.5337
Argentina	Peso	0.266573	0.343053	18.8024
Brazil	Real	0.295967	0.380880	20.8757
Denmark	Kroner	0.134235	0.172747	9.4681
India	Rupee	0.017786	0.022889	1.2545
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.204517	0.263193	14.4253
Mexico	New Peso	0.069127	0.088960	4.8758
New Zealand	Dollar	0.549704	0.707414	38.7727
Norway	Kroner	0.122563	0.157726	8.6448
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013089	0.016844	0.9232
South Africa	Rand	0.125413	0.161394	8.8458
Korea	Won	0.000764	0.000983	0.0539
Sweden	Kroner	0.109000	0.140272	7.6882
Syria	Pound	0.014969	0.019264	1.0558
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024637	0.031705	1.7377
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000362	0.000466	0.0255

SMC raises bid . . .

From page B1

Stock Exchange.

"San Miguel's revised offer is towards the top end of the board's valuation range and it better reflects the value of National Foods' leading brands, market positions and superior management," National Foods chair David Crawford said in a statement.

SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. for his part said the increased offer "demonstrates San Miguel's commitment to achieving its long-term strategic objectives."

"The acquisition of National Foods is an important step towards the realization of our ambition to expand our presence in beverages and food in selected countries in the Asia-Pacific region," he said further.

"We believe that the addition of San Miguel's Asian marketing strengths to National Foods will bring benefits to the Australian food and dairy industry," Cojuangco added.

"I guess we just have to wait and see if Fonterra goes away," Jojo Gonzales, research head at Philippine Equity Partners Inc. said.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DTI joins NTC in fight against text scams

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry yesterday said it had teamed up with the National Telecommunications Commission in the campaign against text scams and unsolicited message broadcast through cellular phone networks.

Assistant Trade Secretary J. Norman R. Hocson said in a statement that the move was made in response to a flurry of complaints received by the two agencies through the ConsumerNet—a network of agencies and local government units created to entertain consumer complaints.

"We have agreed to convene with local telecommunications firms every two weeks to discuss relevant consumer welfare issues," Hocson said.

Hocson said the NTC had issued a memorandum circular outlining general measures and guidelines that would govern the campaign.

Also known as mobile spam, such messages are transmitted through short messaging service and by multimedia messages.

Mobile spams contain commercial and promotional advertisements on store discounts, new logos and ring tones.

The NTC issued Memorandum Circular No. 03-03-2005 last March 15, which adopted the so-called "opt-in regime" that prohibits networks from sending promotional messages unless the subscriber has given permission or consent.

Under the circular, a subscriber who has not opted in (join) shall not be charged for received spams. Subscribers who do not reply to these broadcast/push messages should be considered to have decided not to join and such broadcast should be stopped.

Telcos to end buffet offerings

By Clarissa S. Batino

MAJOR telcos are ending their unlimited mobile phone text and call offerings but are continuing the service for their fixed-line subscribers.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. had asked the National Telecommunications Commission again yesterday to extend its P10-per-call promo for another 30 days starting April 11.

Globe Telecom Inc., for its part, is poised to offer a permanent toll-free national direct dialing for Globelines customers who will apply for postpaid lines until April 19.

Short of admitting that its foray into buffet pricing was a failure, Globe instead asked the NTC to allow Touch Mobile to apply for a permanent P1-per minute rate for within-network calls starting the third minute.

Touch Mobile started its "Piso Power" in January in line with its brand re-launch but was forced to join the eat-all-you-can pricing in March to keep its market share, which was threatened by Smart Communications Inc.'s low-end brand, Talk N' Text.

The joint venture of Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecoms is ending today its 30-day unlimited promo for Touch Mobile subscribers.

It is also prematurely terminating a similar trial promo for Globe prepaid customers that it launched last March 23.

Globe offered unlimited call and text services to its prepaid customers for P300 for 30 days and P50 for unlimited text for five days.

The idea, according to Globe public relations chief Jones Campos, was to promote the Globe deal only through word of mouth and the Internet to see how the system could handle the limited volume.

Like any promo, it was supposed to last for 30 days or until April 22 but Globe said it was cutting short the offering today after having received negative feedback from subscribers.

Apparently, Globe's network could not handle the pressure that a buffet pricing would create.

"The feedback we got was that our customers were not happy. We asked subscribers if they liked it or not. We received mostly complaints and there seemed to be no positive customer experience," said a Globe official.

Smart Communications Inc.'s 258 offering, a buffet serving of P115 for 10 days or unlimited call and P60 for six days of buffet text, may no longer be extended once the 30-day promo offering expires on April 10.

"What we did with Globe was just a soft trial so that we could learn the behavior of customers better without putting quality at very high risk," said Globe president Gerardo Ablaza.

He said on Monday that the price war happening in the mobile phone industry was "unsustainable."

Ablaza insisted that Globe was able to isolate its postpaid subscribers who were not qualified to join the eat-all-you-can promo. "This kind of eat-all-you-can pricing is unsustainable if we are to commit to a minimum level of quality required by the NTC (National Telecommunications Commission)," said Ablaza during Globe's stockholders meeting last Monday.

Stocks end flat

From page B1

Long Distance Telephone Co., which rose 0.7 percent to P1,405, and Ayala Corp., which added 1.3 percent to P7.60.

There were 46 stocks unchanged.

The commercial-industrial and all shares sub-indexes finished higher. The property, banks and financial services, and mining sub-indicators ended lower. The oil subindex was unchanged.

The market was neutral to San Miguel's announcement yesterday that it raised its takeover offer for Australian dairy target National Foods, topping a bid by New Zealand's Fonterra. San Miguel A and B closed unchanged at P57 and P82, respectively.

San Miguel has bid 6.40 Australian dollars (US$4.9) a share in cash for National Foods, higher than Fonterra's A$6.20 (US$4.7) a share.

AP

KING JAMES
AUCTION CALENDAR

FAIRVIEW AUCTION
27 NAPOLI-BELFAST AVE., NORTH FAIRVIEW, Q.C. (NEAR SM FAIRVIEW)
OVER 900 LOTS, '97 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY; '99 PAJERO; CHILLER; PACKAGED-TYPE / SPLIT-TYPE AIRCON; TOILET BOWL; LAVATORY; FAUCET; TILES (4x8); CLEANING PADS; GONDOLA; ORBIT FAN; MINI TV; PORTABLE RADIO; 31" SONY TV; CD COMPONENT; AMPLIFIER; SPEAKER; TRANSFORMER; EQUALIZER; LA GERMANIA 2-BURNER/4-BURNER OVEN; MICROWAVE OVEN; GRILLER; SALA SET; DRIFTWOOD CHAIR; DINING TABLE; BAR TABLE; FILING CABINET; STEEL LOCKER; OFFICE TABLE; SWIVEL CHAIR; WARDROBE CLOSET. POTPOURRI; SCENTED CANDLE; SUSHI PLATES; RED WINE; AND MANY MORE
AUCTION DATE: APRIL 9, 2005 (SAT) 10:30 AM

4 BRANCHES FIRST SAVINGS BANK
E. RODRIGUEZ AVE., NEAR ST. LUKES HOSPITAL, Q.C.
FURNITURE; FIXTURES AND EQUIPMENT
AUCTION DATE: APRIL 11, 2005 (MON) 10:30 AM

PULILAN WAREHOUSE AUCTION
333 OLD NATIONAL HIGHWAY, STO. CRISTO, PULILAN, BULACAN
RESTAURANT EQUIPMENT; HOUSEHOLD ITEMS; OFFICE FURNITURE; FIXTURE; KITCHEN EQUIPMENT
AUCTION DATE: APRIL 17, 2005 (SUN) 10:30 AM

LEADING COFFEE SHOP
T. MORATO COR. SCT. CASTOR QUEZON CITY
FURNITURE; FIXTURE; KITCHEN EQUIPMENT
AUCTION DATE: APRIL 23, 2005 (SAT) 1:00 PM

REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT P 5,000.00
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Deposit Amount (in pesos)	Interest Rates (%) 30 days	60 days	90 days	1 year
100,000 - 499,999	4.875	5.000	5.125	5.250
500,000 - 999,999	5.500	5.625	5.750	6.000
1.0MM - 4,999,999	5.750	6.000	6.125	6.250
5.0MM - 9,999,999	6.000	6.250	6.375	6.500
10 million and up	6.250	6.500	6.750	7.000

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April 9-10, 2005, 9:00am-6:00pm
- Choose among the largest selection of BMW Certified Pre-Owned cars ever gathered in one place.
- Take advantage of special event prices.
- Own a BMW 3 Series Executive Car with low mileage through the low down payment and low monthly financing program, or choose from other special financing packages.
- Trade in any brand of car for a BMW Certified Pre-Owned unit.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0860 Series of 2005

Housewife wins P3 M through myGlobe's Win a Dream promo

A BRAND new house and lot, a fancy car, and a start-up business of her own. That's what Amelia Torres dreamed, believed and will soon realize, thanks to myGlobe's Win a Dream promo.

The lucky 30 year old texted her way to win P3 million cash when she joined and subscribed to one of myGlobe's 20 text services. "I normally don't join many contests but since this was something interesting and entertaining, so I readily subscribed", said the brand new millionaire.

Started last November 2004 to January 2005, myGlobe's Win a Dream promo is the only text-based contest that enables winners to choose their dream prize from among the following: P3 million cash; $50,000; a monthly lifetime pay of P10,000; P3 million worth of Globe Autoload; or 100 cellphone units.

In order to qualify for this one-of-a-kind promo, Globe Telecom and TM sim holders with a postpaid plan or prepaid plan needed only to subscribe to any of myGlobe's content services, ranging from inspiring and entertaining quotes, to colorful MMS and wallpaper services. Upon subscription, users automatically received five (5) raffle entries for SMS subscription, ten (10) raffle entries for MMS subscription, forty (40) raffle entries for Wallpaper subscription. More downloads ensured more raffle entries for the subscriber.

With her recent winnings, Amelia intends to share the prize money with her husband and family. "This has been a dream come true for me. I'm glad that Globe gave this wonderful opportunity for my loved ones to experience and enjoy", said the shy housewife.

You too can someday turn your dreams into reality. Just keep joining myGlobe's many text-based promos, by texting to 2363 and subscribing to cool SMS services and downloading MMS content for a chance to win great, great prizes.

things
Globe
AMELIA TORRES
THREE MILLION PESOS ONLY
P 3,000,000.00
MYGLOBE

MYGLOBE winner Amelia Torres receives her 3 million peso check from Raymond Racaza, VP operations for Xurpas Inc. Looking on is Alexis Ragos, senior product manager of value added services, Globe Telecom.

VSO, AMT FROM TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER NOW AVAILABLE IN MANILA

The Texas Medical Center, the largest medical complex in the world, has launched its international patient services in Manila. Patients can now get a Virtual Second Opinion (VSO) from leading international specialists without leaving the Philippines, and may also avail of the latest in Advanced Medical Treatment (AMT) options in Houston, Texas. U.S. Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone poses with senior officials from St. Luke's Episcopal Health System (SLEH) of the Texas Medical Center. Shown with Ambassador Ricciardone (center) are (from left): Warren Whitehead, vice president; Dr. Joseph Varon, M.D.; Dr. Andres Mesa, M.D.; and Leo de Leon, president, Houston Medical Group. SLEH is officially represented in the country by the Houston Medical Group and can be reached at (632) 888-5266.

Mirant develops employee volunteer program - Tanglaw

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In line with this effort, the corporate office of Mirant Phils in partnership with Hands On Manila Foundation Inc (HOM) has initiated and institutionalized Mirant's employee volunteer program. HOM is a non-profit volunteer management organization that provides a wide array of volunteer opportunities for interested individuals. With the partnership, Mirant has developed a unique program called Tanglaw: An Employee Engagement Program.

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Coconut fiber is good for your heart

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Presently, dietary fiber has not been classified as an essential nutrient but the U.S. Surgeon General and Professional Health Association are widely advocating the consumption of 20 to 35 grams of dietary fiber to promote not only a healthier cardiovascular system but a healthy digestive system as well. Johns Hopkins Medical Center is one of those institutions that included the increase intake of dietary fiber in the diet as part of their Cardiac Rehabilitation protocol.

One source of dietary fiber is the coconut. The coconut is dubbed as the tree of life because of the various uses and benefits it can give. As a functional food, coconut products are use for cooking and baking. A renewed attention is now given to the beneficial use of coconut meat as a source of dietary fiber. According to the Philippine Food and Nutrition Research Institute, coconut meat fiber has a comparable quantity of dietary fiber compared to oats. According to the same source coconut has a higher dietary fiber compared to wheat.

Kolestrim capsule a new product by ABS Herbs contains pure coconut meat fiber. It aids the body to trim down unwanted cholesterol in the body a cost-effective alternative to expensive cholesterol lowering drugs. This food supplement provides botanical and nutrient factors that help maintain normal cardiovascular function. Garlic, a known cholesterol-lowering herb, is perhaps the most studied herb that aid in cholesterol metabolism and maintaining normal blood pressure. Some of the studies on this herb have demonstrated the increase in heart function by increasing oxygen supply in the heart and improving blood circulation in the heart's blood vessels. King of bitters, an indigenous herb of the Philippines, aids the function of the liver and help in cholesterol metabolism. Another ingredient of Kolestrim is Pau d' Arco, a strong antioxidant that helps the body cope with oxidative stress. Kolestrim is available at Mercury Drugstores and all leading drugstores nationwide. To learn more visit www.abs-herbs.com.ph.

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ProductFILES

A sweet graduation

Party Cake
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GRADUATIONS are more sweet than sad when you share a Nestlé Party Cake. Eating a Nestlé Party Cake is the best moment in any gathering because it's both an ice cream and a cake that comes in two jump-up-and-down flavors: Mango Cream Pie - made with delectable mango and cream ice cream, with luscious mango bits and ripple on a bed of yummy butter cake; and Choco Fudge Brownie Cake - a decadent dessert of chocolate and vanilla ice cream with marshmallows on top and brownies at the bottom. End the school year with a bang and a big bite of delicious Nestlé Party Cake. Hurry, it's now available in leading grocery outlets nationwide.

New Charmee Feminine Wipes

new
Charmee
feminine wipes
10 Soft & Gentle Wipes

CHARMEE Feminine Wipes is the latest addition to the Charmee feminine protection family. Its soft and gentle wet tissue texture, hypo allergenic and antibacterial ingredients, ph balance, and mild powder scent makes it one of a kind. It is also alcohol free to make sure it causes no irritation. Charmee Feminine Wipes come in a convenient opaque pink plastic pack that is easy to carry around or slip in your bag. Suggested retail price is at P19.50 for a pack of 10 pulls and is available at leading supermarkets, groceries and drugstores If you really want to feel clean, comfortable and great 24/7, this new product is a must for full protection everyday, no matter where you are.

Bits Clips

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MERCER Human Resource Consulting, the world's leading employee benefits, remuneration and human resources consulting firm, will be holding the 3rd Human Capital Forum on April 14, from 1 to 5 p.m. Venue will be at Makati AB Function Room, Makati Shangri-la Hotel. Topics are: Managing Talent: Facts, Trends and Case Studies; Outlook for Compensation 2005: A cross regional perspective; Trends in Flexben. For inquiries contact Blessie Pioquinto (02)810-0704 local 107 and 103, email at blessie.pioquinto@mercer.com.

Business power through financial analysis

CRUCIAL business decisions are the keys to unlock the power within an organization. Entrepreneurs and professional managers understand that the foundation lies in the proper and correct interpretation of financial reports. Gain a full understanding of how financial reports may be used for critical short-term and long-term planning and decision-making. Get a hands-on experience in analyzing and interpreting actual financial data. Attend this seminar from April 26 to 28 at the Richmonde Hotel. For inquiries call the following numbers: 0918-91578973 and look for Lenlen; 0917-8197073 and look for Rose or e-mail at skillsoncall@yahoo.com.

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SYNERGY Worldwide, will unveil its plans for the Philippines during a launching event to be held at the University of Asia and the Pacific on April 9 at 6:30 p.m. Synergy Worldwide offers a one-stop shopping place for anyone who wants to purchase quality natural health supplements and personal care products. Its products range from single herbs, herb combinations, vitamins, minerals and homeopathics to essential oils, reverse osmosis devices and waterless cookware. For more information call 830-0805/914-2072 or visit www.synergyworldwide.com.

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E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Aries Espinosa

Housewife wins P3 M through myGlobe's Win a Dream promo

A BRAND new house and lot, a fancy car, and a start-up business of her own. That's what Ameila Torres dreamed, believed and will soon realize, thanks to myGlobe's Win a Dream promo.

The lucky 30 year old texted her way to win P3 million cash when she joined and subscribed to one of myGlobe's 20 text services. "I normally don't join many contests but since this was something interesting and entertaining, so I readily subscribed", said the brand new millionaire.

Started last November 2004 to January 2005, myGlobe's Win a Dream promo is the only text-based contest that enables winners to choose their dream prize from among the following: P3 million cash; $50,000; a monthly lifetime pay of P10,000; P3 million worth of Globe Autoload; or 100 cellphone units.

In order to qualify for this one-of-a-kind promo, Globe Telecom and TM sim holders with a postpaid plan or prepaid plan needed only to subscribe to any of myGlobe's content services, ranging from inspiring and entertaining quotes, to colorful MMS and wallpaper services. Upon subscription, users automatically received five (5) raffle entries for SMS subscription, ten (10) raffle entries for MMS subscription, forty (40) raffle entries for Wallpaper subscription. More downloads ensured more raffle entries for the subscriber.

With her recent winnings, Amelia intends to share the prize money with her husband and family. "This has been a dream come true for me. I'm glad that Globe gave this wonderful opportunity for my loved ones to experience and enjoy", said the shy housewife.

You too can someday turn your dreams into reality. Just keep joining myGlobe's many text-based promos, by texting to 2363 and subscribing to cool SMS services and downloading MMS content for a chance to win great, great prizes.

hings
Globe
MYGLOBE
AMELIA TORRES
THREE MILLION PESOS ONLY
P 3,000,000.00

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Finance backs imposition of excise tax on soft drinks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has endorsed the proposal in Congress to impose a 10-percent excise tax on soft drinks and juice drinks.

Such a move was estimated to yield P5.6 billion in additional revenue a year for the government.

The DOF said in a position paper that taxing carbonated and juice drinks would help hasten the attainment of the government's objective to wipe out of its budget deficit by 2010.

The move will complement a legislative proposal to reform the VAT system by increasing the rate from 10 percent to 12 percent and lifting VAT exemptions of several products and services.

Taxing soft drinks and juices will be a lucrative revenue source for the government since household consumption of such products has been increasing. The DOF said household expenditures on non-alcoholic beverages reached P25.2 billion in 2000, or 115 percent higher than the consumption level in 1994.

The DOF also said that in 2000, family expenditure for non-alcoholic beverages accounted for 1.4 percent of the food products consumed by households.

The Philippines was the second-largest market for carbonated soft drinks in Asia, following China, in 2001, the DOF said, citing a study conducted by the US-based marketing research firm Beverage Marketing Corp.

The per-capita consumption of soft drinks in the country was placed at 121 liters per person per year, compared with Taiwan's 72 liters and China's 15 liters. Sales of soft drinks also went up to 3.6 billion liters in 2001 from only 3 billion in 1998, the DOF said.

The DOF admitted that imposing an excise tax on soft drinks could elicit questions on its appropriateness, considering that excise tax is usually imposed only on products that are either luxurious or bad for one's health—such as cigarettes and alcohol—or those that need a regulated consumption, such as oil.

The DOF admitted that non-alcoholic beverages could not be considered luxurious commodities, because they are consumed more by middle-income families rather than higher-income consumers. But it also said that these products could not be considered essential and could not be compared with rice, sardines, instant noodles and milk.

"(But) they may be regarded as non-essential commodity, which may be another valid reason for imposing excise tax," the DOF said.

The DOF also said soft drinks were price-inelastic, a common trait for products that are slapped with an excise tax.

TAIPAN SEND-OFF
Taipan Lucio Tan (left) boards a Philippine Airlines' Boeing 747 jet carrying over 400 young students bound for Xiamen, China, for an eight-week summer camp. Now on its fifth year, the summer camp is co-sponsored by Tan to promote closer ties between the Philippines and China. With Tan are Emilio Gan and James Wang, president and vice president, respectively, of the Philippine Chinese Education Research Center, the program's administrator.

First Value -For-Money Airline to Fly into Ninoy Aquino International Airport

Jetstar Asia to commence daily flights to Manila this month

Manila, April 5th, 2005 - Jetstar Asia announced that would begin services to Manila, Philippines on April 27th 2005, with the introduction of daily flights between Manila's commercial passenger hub, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and Singapore's Changi Airport.

To celebrate the Manila launch, a special introductory price for one-way airfares, from Manila to Singapore is offered at US$59. After which, everyday low fares will start from US$79.

"We are delighted to be able to fly from Ninoy Aquino' International airport and further strengthen the links between the Philippines and Singapore," said Jetstar Asia CEO Ken Ryan.

"With Jetstar Asia's great ticket prices and the convenience of flying from the primary international airport, we're very confident that our Manila-Singapore service will be hugely popular with Filipinos looking to visit Singapore. "

Jetstar Asia's flight from Singapore to Manila will be 3K561 leaving at 7:50 am and arriving at 11:20 am, and the return flight from Manila will be Jetstar Asia flight 3K562 at 12:20 pm arriving Singapore at 3:45 pm.

"We would like to extend our congratulations to Jetstar Asia in anticipation of their inaugural flight into Philippines," said Mr Rocson Chang, Area Director, Philippines & Brunei for the Singapore Tourism Board. "Singapore remains ASEAN's No. 1 tourism source into the Philippines. Similarly, Year 2004 saw a spectacular growth of Philippine visitors to Singapore - up 40% against 2003. The arrival of Jetstar Asia will serve to enhance this strong tourism traffic & further cement the already excellent bilateral relationship between both our republics & our peoples."

Customers wanting to take advantage of the fabulous launch offers, can book seats for Manila by visiting Jetstar Asia's website at www.jetstarasia.com, by calling (63) 2-900 3051 or contacting Qantas Airways at (63) 2-810 4744. Introductory fare is available for bookings made by April 18th and travel completed by June 30th 2005. Limited seats are available.

About Jetstar Asia

Jetstar Asia is a partnership between Qantas (49%); Tony Chew (22%); FF Wong (10%) and Temasek Holdings (Private) Limited (19%). The airline currently flies to multiple destinations within five hours of Singapore including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand and Philippines.

ADVT

When uncertainty is certain, and the unexpected is expected, you'll still be in control.

In business, adapting to change and being always in control is the name of the game. In the field of information technology infrastructure, one name is truly reliable, the Intel® processor-based HP ProLiant servers. Be the master of change with HP ProLiant servers. Engineered to deliver maximum uptime, minimal deployment and minimal maintenance hassles, all while providing enough scalability for years to come, these HP ProLiant servers are mercilessly tested with the most demanding and latest industry-standards. Designed for effortless troubleshooting and expansion, you can always demand on these HP ProLiant servers to adapt to your needs. It has everything that you expect and know from these HP machines at prices that adapt to your budgets too. We think you'll like our adaptive approach to infrastructure.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Benedicto G. Miran, Sr. was extrajudicially settled by the heirs on March 8, 2005 as per Doc. No. 446, Page No. 91, Book 1 Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Nenita A. Dantes of Quezon City.
PDI-Mach 31,April7&14, 2005

Notice is hereby given that the estates of the late ANDREA SAN CARLOS FABELLA, LEONISA F. ZALAMEA-ASERON and NATIVIDAD F. ZALAMEA-MAGALLONA were settled by their heirs through an extrajudicial settlement acknowledged before Not. Pub. Atty. Rhea L. Buncan of Q.C. under Doc. 285; Page 57, Bk XIII Series of 2005. (PDI 4/7, 14, & 21 '05)

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NOTICE OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Following the successful conclusion of Absconder Proceedings, on 1st March 2005, a Confiscation Order under Section 8 of the Organised and Serious Crimes Ordinance, Cap 455 of the Laws of Hong Kong was issued by Mr. Justice Lugar-Mawson in the Hong Kong Court of First Instance. On 24th March 2005 the assets of the following Respondents in Hong Kong were confiscated. Notice is hereby given that on 5th May 2005 an application will be made to the Court of First Instance to have the Restraint Order over the assets of the Respondents HCMP 4221 of 2002 discharged.

Amador PASTRANA Philippines passport ZZ017001 Date of birth 4th May 1972.	Respondent 1
Alpha Company Ltd Company No 15011	Respondent 2
Jindell Investment Ltd Company No 367520	Respondent 3
Jupiter Advisory Ltd Company No 407452	Respondent 4
First Pacific Company Ltd Company No 7009	Respondent 5
Systems International Ltd Company No 105043B	Respondent 6
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Sabre International Ltd Company No 6470	Respondent 16
Vantage International Management Group Inc. Company No 8403	Respondent 17
Union Trading Ltd Company No 15014	Respondent 18
Novelle Investment Partners Ltd (Bahamas) Company No 81563B	Respondent 19
United Resources Asset Management Inc SEC Reg No A200005310	Respondent 20
Allied European Holdings Ltd Company No 8313	Respondent 21

Any person or company who is a Respondent can obtain a copy of documents and affirmations in relation to the hearing from either Ma. Elmira A. Alconaba, Assistant Director, Compliance and Enforcement Department Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, or Detective Senior Inspector David COPE, Financial Investigations Division, Hong Kong Police, 21st Floor, Arsenal House West Wing, Police Headquarters, Arsenal Street, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. HCMP 4221 of 2002 refers.

(PDI – April 7, 8 & 9, 2005)

ANNOUNCEMENT

In compliance with the requirement of Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board re: Change of Business Status, notice is hereby given that **ELKAN KONSTRAK & AGGREGATES**, a sole proprietorship construction business company has changed its business name and status to **ELKANKONSTRAK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION** with principal business address at P#5 Gogon, Legazpi City now a duly organized construction corporation under the laws of the Philippines.

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NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE SCRAP/JUNK ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : **April 27, 2005, 2:00 p.m., Solarium Hall, Bldg.-1 Grd. Floor, NPC-HO, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Q.C.**

The National Power Corporation will conduct a public bidding of the following scrap and junk items located at various NPC stations.

SCHEDULE - I

Item Description and Location	Minimum Bid Price
1. One (1) lot of scrap metals consisting of pipe casings, pipes, steel plate cuttings, junk plant equipment, stainless steel pipes located UPI Nag-40 Stockyard, UPI S-25 Stockyard and NPC Nag-36 Stockyard and Warehouse, Tiwi Geothermal Power Plant Complex, Tiwi, Albay Province.	P 9,909,610.00/lot
2. One (1) lot junk substation equipment, motor vehicle and computers and office equipment located at Batangas S/S, Mahabang Parang, Batangas City	P 174,000.00/lot

SCHEDULE - II

1. One (1) lot junk substation batteries, 204 pieces located at TIWI Geothermal Power Plant, Tiwi, Albay Province **Note: Prospective awardee for this item is required to secure Permit To Transport used batteries form the Environmental Management Bureau, DENR and submit certification of recycling from EMB-DENR accredited waste/used battery recyclers.**	P 16,320.00/lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. **PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S/CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE OFFER.**
2. **LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2004, ORIGINAL OR XEROX COPY) OF THE BIDDER OR AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT (ORIGINAL) OF THE COMPANY AND ONE (1) COPY OF VALID IDENTIFICATION CARD LIKE DRIVER'S LICENSE, GSIS ID, SSS ID, POSTAL ID, PASSPORT, PRC ID AND COMPANY ID.**

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from Mr. Alfonso D. Alday, Manager, Warehousing, Inventory, Traffic and Asset Disposal Division (WITADD) at Bldg. 1, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Ave., Diliman, Q.C. or call telephone no. 922-8431. **Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 p.m. April 26, 2005.**

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI - April 7, 8 & 9, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

REGION VI, ILOILO CITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FOR GRAINS HANDLING SERVICES FOR NFA REGION VI

The National Food Authority (NFA), Region VI, Iloilo City invites qualified handling services contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of grain handling services in the different warehouses in Region VI for calendar year 2005.

LOT NO.	PROVINCE	ESTIMATED VOLUME TO BE HANDLED (In bag of 50 kgs)	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)
1	Aklan	102,000	P 404,250.00
2	Antique	117,000	P 486,500.00
3	Capiz	243,000	P 1,186,500.00
4	Iloilo & Guimaras	511,000	P 2,542,750.00
5	Negros Occidental	503,000	P 1,765,750.00

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

Activity	Date	Time
1. Issuance of eligibility requirements and bid forms	April 1-22, 2005	8 AM-5 PM
2. Pre-bid conference	April 29, 2005	9:30 AM
3. Submission and opening of eligibility requirements and bid documents	May 10, 2005	10:00 AM

Interested parties may secure the application forms, eligibility requirements and bid forms from the RBAC Secretariat at NFA Regional Office after payment of a non-refundable / non-transferable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per lot.

For inquiry, please call RBAC Secretariat through telephone number (033) 329-2165 and telefax number (033) 329-6383.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY, TECHNICALITY OR DEFECT FOUND THEREIN AND ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) **VILMA H. ZARRAGA, MNSA**
RBAC CHAIRMAN
Asst. Regional Director

(PDI–March 31 & April 7, 2005)

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.

G/F MWSI Bldg., MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines 1100
Tel. Nos. 435-3366, 920-5521 loc. 3600, 3615, 3616

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY & E-BIDDING FOR VARIOUS BRASS FITTINGS

Maynilad Water Services, Inc. is inviting all interested Suppliers/ Manufacturers (local and foreign) to participate in the product qualification and E-Bidding for the supply and delivery of various types & sizes of Brass Fittings as listed below, as per MWSI Standard Specification Section 32009 02/31 Jan 05 (revised):

No.	Qty.	Item/Description
1	30,000 pcs.	Angle Valve with lockwing 3/4 x 1/2 FTE
2	40,000 pcs.	Adaptor Union Coupling 25mm CJ/CJ for PE
3	8,000 pcs.	Adaptor Union Coupling 32mm CJ/CJ for PE
4	1,000 pcs.	Adaptor Union Coupling 50mm CJ/CJ for PE
5	70,000 pcs.	Adaptor Straight Coupling 25mm x 3/4 ISO 7 CJ x FTE
6	7,200 pcs.	Bushing 3/4 x 1/2 MTE/FTE ISO 7
7	25,020 pcs.	Nipple Close 1/2 MTE ISO 7
8	32,300 pcs.	Nipple Close 3/4 MTE ISO 7
9	7,000 pcs.	Nipple Close 1 MTE ISO 7

Interested parties may obtain further information and secure a complete set of pre-qualification forms, technical specification and terms and conditions from **April 6 to 13, 2005.** The documents can be secured at the Purchasing Department, Basement, MWSI Building, MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City. Telephone Nos. 435-3366/435-3374; Fax No. 928-2303.

As part of pre-qualification, all prospective bidders are required to submit shop drawing and samples (at least 3 pieces) per item, together with the other pre-qualification documents as enumerated in the Terms and Conditions, **on or before April 20, 2005** at the MWSI-Purchasing Department Basement, MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City. Only those bidders who have passed the pre-qualification process shall be invited to participate in the E-bid event. Disqualified applicants shall be notified in writing.

The Electronic Bidding, scheduled on **April 29, 2005 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m.** will be held at Bayantrade's Office (24/F IBM Plaza, Eastwood City Cyberpark, Libis, Quezon City).

(Sgd.) **IGNACIO B. GIMENEZ**
SAVP, Corporate Logistics

(PDI - Apr. 7, 2005)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar St. cor. Dr. J. Quintos St., Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or (b) 60% Filipino owned partnerships/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-077	1 lot Two (2) Year Contract for courier and forwarding delivery service agreement for LANDBANK Regional Branches' inward and outward Clearing Checks for the period May 1, 2005 to April 30, 2007	P 2,467,680.00 or P 102,820.00 per month	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on April 27, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on April 14, 2005 at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI – March 31 & April 7, 2005)

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all service providers/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

1. **Janitorial Services of Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005** with an approved Budget of **P4,600,000.00** chargeable against CY 2005 AFPMC Operating Budget.
2. **Laundry Services of Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005** with an approved budget of **P1,250,000.00** chargeable against CY 2005 AFPMC Operating Budget.
3. **Waste Management of Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005** with an approved budget of **P600,000.00** chargeable against CY 2005 AFPMC Operating Budget.

Bid documents will be available for issuance starting **March 31, 2005** until **April 29, 2005** during office hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) at the BAC Secretariat Office of the AFP Bids and Awards Committee, G/F Bulwagang Syquio, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of a non-refundable amount of ***Four Thousand Six Hundred Pesos (PHP 4,600.00) for the Janitorial Services, One Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Pesos (Php 1,250.00) for the Laundry Services and Six Hundred Pesos (Php 600.00) for the Healthcare Waste Collection Service.*** The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check in favor of **AFP.**

Representatives are required to present a **Special Power of Attorney,** issued by the prospective bidder before issuance of the Bid Documents and all other transactions thereto.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on the following dates:

Nomenclature	*Date / Place*
Janitorial Services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005	**April 22, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.** at the Conference Room, OCG, AFP Medical Center, V Luna Road, Quezon City.
Laundry Services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005	**April 22, 2005 at 11:00 A.M.** at the Conference Room, OCG, AFP Medical Center, V Luna Road, Quezon City
Waste Management of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005	**April 22, 2005 at 1:00 P.M.** at the Conference Room, OCG, AFP Medical Center, V Luna Road, Quezon City.

Bidders may inquire in writing to the BAC Secretariat three (3) days prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

Deadline for submission of applications for eligibility requirements and the bid envelopes are as follows:

Nomenclature	*Date / Place*
Janitorial Services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005	**May 6, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.** at the Conference Room, OCG, AFP Medical Center, V Luna Road, Quezon City.
Laundry Services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005	**May 10, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.** at the Conference Room, OCG, AFP Medical Center, V Luna Road, Quezon City.
Waste Management of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center for CY 2005	**May 13, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.** at the Conference Room, OCG, AFP Medical Center, V Luna Road, Quezon City.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids as specified in RA 9184 without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of this bid.

(Sgd.) JORGE G NECESITO
Rear Admiral AFP
Chairman

(PDI – March 31 & April 7, 2005)

PMAP seminars

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines is sponsoring a seminar on Recruitment and Placement of Workers scheduled on Apr. 12. Registration fee is P3,400 for PMAP members and P4,900 for non PMAP members. A three-day workshop on Competency Design and Development Workshop will be held on April 13-15, 2005. Registration fee is P7,700 for PMAP Members and P9,200 for Non PMAP Members. The program entitled Managing the Training and Development Function is scheduled on April 18-19, 2005. Registration fee is P5,600 for PMAP Members and P7,100 for Non PMAP Center. All programs will be held at PMAP Center in Mandaluyong City. For reservations, please contact The Human Resource Management Development Center at telephone numbers 726-1581; 726-1588 or 726-1532; email address: maylene.gatdula@pmap.org.ph or you may visit the website: www.pmap.org.ph

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

RAMON "Cito" M. ECHEVARRIA, JR.

Born in Manila on September 24, 1950;
Returned to the Lord on April 2, 2005.

His wife **Gloria**;
Children:
Ramonchu, Pia and **Ana**;
Parents:
Ramon and **Leonor,**
Brother and Sisters:
Henry, Maryam, Isabel and **Marilen**

Wish to thank all those who by expressing condolence, keeping vigil, offering prayers or any other means have helped to alleviate the family's grief.

The body lies in state at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Parlor, Cebu City, and following Holy Mass there at 9:00 a.m. today, April 7, will be transferred to the Cosmopolitan Crematorium for cremation.

BENJAMIN FRANCISCO CIRIACO

Died in the Grace of our Lord on 3 April 2005 at the age of 77.

His bereaved wife **Norma**; children **Marlon, Armida** and **Eloisa**; brothers and sisters **Lumen, Conrado, Ernesto, Lucy, Nerie, Perla,** and **Fabian,** brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 808 [illegible] St., Lapulapu City, Cebu.

Interment will follow at noon on Saturday, 9 April 2005, at the UCCP Memorial Park, Lapulapu City.

> **"For God so loved the world,**
> **that He gave His only begotten Son,**
> **that whoever believes in Him**
> **shall not perish but have everlasting life."**
>
> John 3:16

Dra. Lydia S. Reyes DMD

Born: September 17, 1942
Died: April 4, 2005
At the age of 62

Her bereaved husband Antonio,
children Arlan and Tina, Arvin.
Grandchild Nina,
Brothers and Sisters.
Request the pious readers
to join us in prayer for the
eternal repose of her soul.

Her wake is at La Funeraria Paz
Araneta Ave., Q.C. till April 9, 2005.

We design OBITUARIES for free.

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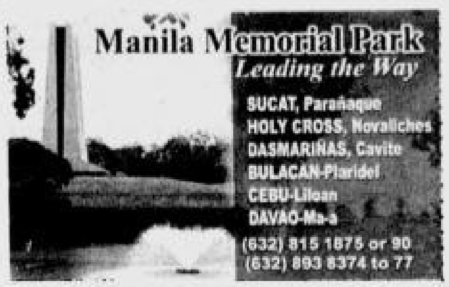
OBITUARIES



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BULACAN-Plaridel
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(632) 893 8374 to 77

Porfiria Paredes Acosta

November 4, 1920 - April 5, 2005
Bantay, Santa Cruz, Ilocos Sur & Nueva Vizcaya

Beloved wife of the late Judge Eficio Acosta; children Nick & Alma, Rudy & Penny, Tessie, Vicky & Rey, Ely & Nonoy, Cathy & Bertie, Cristy & Mehran, Bobby, Louie, Betty & Mike; her grandchildren April & Keith, Franchette & Boyet, Brian, Nikko, Jing-jing & Jeanette, Karla, Jessica & Eric, Nicey & Robin, Erika, Hazel, Valyn, Stephie & Jay, Coco & Ancoy, Diana, Lissy, Andrew, Katrina, Tricia, Justin, Dierdra, Jon, Nakisa, Dylan, Arthur, Paolo, Noelle & Sophia; great grandchildren Alexandra, Isabella & Gabriel; brother Ansing & sisters Josefa & Corazon request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on April 10, 2005 at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Quezon City.

"Come to me... and I will give you rest."
(Mt 12:28)

DR. JOAQUIN V. FERRER, SR.

***Chief Dental Service Officer*, Department of Health – Region I, and *Past-President*, Department of Health, National Association of Dentists, 1983-84.**

Peacefully joined our risen Lord on April 1, 2005 (First Friday) at the age of 76.

His loving wife, **Violeta**, and children **Joseph, Fr. Joaquin Jr., SVD, John, Josephine, Joselito, James, Julie,** and **Jovelyn** (†); sisters, **Sr. Mariflora, SSpS,** and **Sr. Mary Consuelo, RGS**; in-laws and grandchildren; relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at their home residence: 56 McKinley St., Binmaley, Pangasinan.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated on April 8, 2005 at 9:30AM at Our Lady of Purification Parish Church, Binmaley, Pangasinan. Interment follows at the Catholic Cemetery.

BENJAMIN NOCHE JIMENEZ

Who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on April 5, 2005 at the age of 65.

His bereaved wife **Delia Ramos Jimenez**; children **Bendie, Debie, Bendel**; son- and daughter-in-law; grandchildren; relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at chapel 3 & 4 Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City and will be transferred to San Luis, Batangas on April 11, 2005 at 7:00 A.M.

Interment will be on April 12, 2005
at Eastern Park in San Luis, Batangas
at 11:00 AM after 9:00 AM Mass.

Message of Thanks

For visiting us and being with us in our time of sorrows...
For praying with us and for us...
For the Mass cards and messages of sympathy and condolences...
For the beautiful flowers to express compassion...
For joining us in our nightly vigils...
For attending the Masses and funeral rites...
For thinking of us in our hour of grief...
For all that you have done to console our hearts...

Our sincerest gratitude.

From the family of the late

Atty. Doris de Leon Almeda

ATTY. PILAR PEREZ NABLE

*Joined her husband "**Iking**" on April 5, 2005*
and now peacefully rests in the infinite warmth and grace of our Lord

Her loving children **Marita**, **Monina** (†), **Carlos Jr.**, **Juanita** and **Victor**; their loving spouses **Boy**, **Freddie**, **Baby**, **Jess** and **Amee**; her loving grandchildren **Jong** and **Jeng**, **Jombet** and **Anna**, **Coy** and **Mellissa**, **Almond**, **Freddie Boy**, **Therese** and **Aylwin**, **Florynne** and **Rommel**, **Pipes**, **Jasmine**, **Jaime**, **Jayvee**, **Monica**; her loving great grandchildren **SAM**, **Matthew**, **Julia**, **Adrian**, **Aliyah**; her relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose and happiness of her soul.

Her cremated remains lie in state at the Divine Mercy Chapel of Xavierville Subdivision, Phase I, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 9, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

COL. SALVADOR EVALLE RUEDA (Ret.)

Military Service 1955 to 1982
Member, Knights of Columbus

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 4, 2005

Survived by his loving wife,
Ester Zaballero Rueda

His children **Juancho & Jean, Marie & Ramon, Leo & Beng, Joey & Poyan** and **Alex & Inia**

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be held on Saturday, April 9, 2005, Masses will be offered in Queens and Long Beach, New York; South Carolina; NSW, Australia.

(For more information please call Juancho 0910 233 0812 or Leo 0927 563 3325)

"In peace
I shall both
lie down
and sleep
for You
alone Lord
make me
secure."
(Psalm 4:9)

Thank You!

THE FAMILY OF THE LATE

MA. CORAZON ARAULLO - GOQUINGCO

24 JUNE 1936 - 22 MARCH 2005

ACKNOWLEDGE WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE,
DEAR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS WHO
OFFERED PRAYERS AND MASSES, SENT BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS,
AND COMFORTED US DURING OUR TIME OF BEREAVEMENT.

WE THANK OUR ALMIGHTY FATHER FOR SHARING HER
AS HIS EXTRAORDINARY GIFT TO US.

NOW THAT HER EARTHLY TRIALS ARE OVER,
PLEASE JOIN US, AS WE CONTINUE TO PRAY
FOR HER ETERNAL REPOSE, PEACE AND HAPPINESS
IN OUR LORD'S LOVING EMBRACE.

I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith

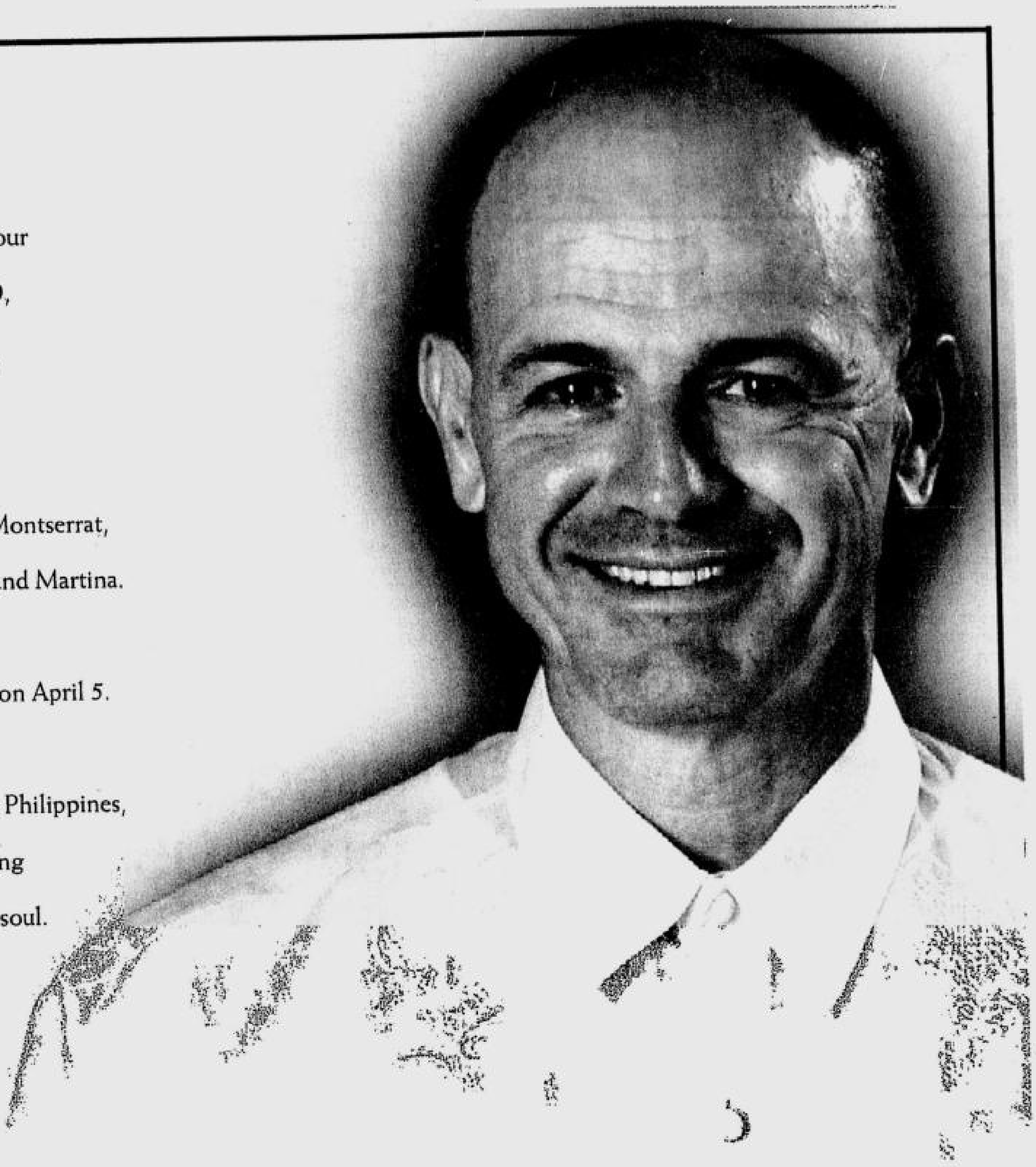
(2 Timothy 4)

With deepest sorrow,
we announce the passing of our
former Chairman and CEO,
Mr. Salvador Pigem,
last April 4, 2005.

Mr. Pigem is survived by his wife, Montserrat,
and his children, Paula, Salvador Jr. and Martina.

He was buried in Barcelona, Spain on April 5.

We, the employees of Nestlé in the Philippines,
ask you to join us in praying
for the eternal repose of his soul.



Nestlē

Salvador Pigem
1951-2005

Salvador Pigem

1951-2005

Life is short. His, too short.
But we are still thankful.
His vision was an inspiration.
His humanity was felt by us all.
Yes, his life was short.
We know he lived it well.
With deepest sadness,
we his friends and teammates
at Publicis Manila and ZenithOptimedia
bid him farewell
as we pray for
his glorious entry
to eternal life.

PUBLICIS
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BUSINESS

Petron, Shell urged to justify price hikes

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CONSUMER and Oil Price Watch (COPW) has urged the joint oil monitoring task force of the departments of justice and energy to look into the computation of the selling prices of oil refiners Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.

COPW chair Raul Concepcion said in a statement yesterday that Petron and Shell should base their prices at the pump on two regional benchmarks: the Dubai crude and the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products.

But during the latest pump price hike, Concepcion claimed that the two companies based their price increase solely on MOPS.

Less than a week ago, local oil firms jacked up the pump prices of their gasoline, diesel and kerosene by 50 centavos a liter in light of the skyrocketing prices of oil in the regional and world markets.

Petron, however, did not raise its prices over the weekend.

Concepcion said the increase resulted in over-recoveries for both Shell and Caltex to the tune of P1.36 a liter for diesel and 89 centavos a liter for gasoline because the price adjustments were based solely on MOPS.

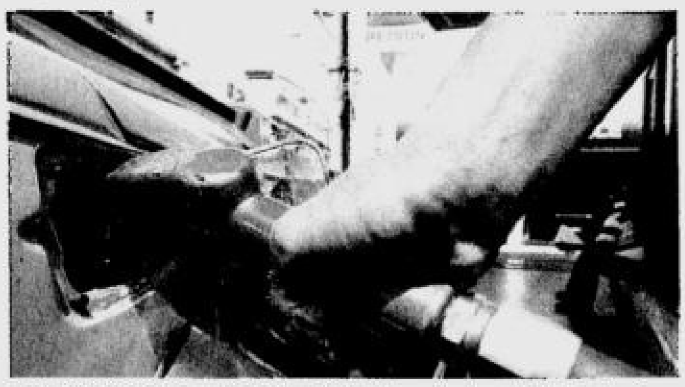
Concepcion said a refiner should base 70 percent of its prices on Dubai crude, and 30 percent on MOPS.

Dubai crude, although already at an April average of $50.30 a barrel as of April 4, was still priced lower than the unleaded gasoline and diesel based on the MOPS benchmark.

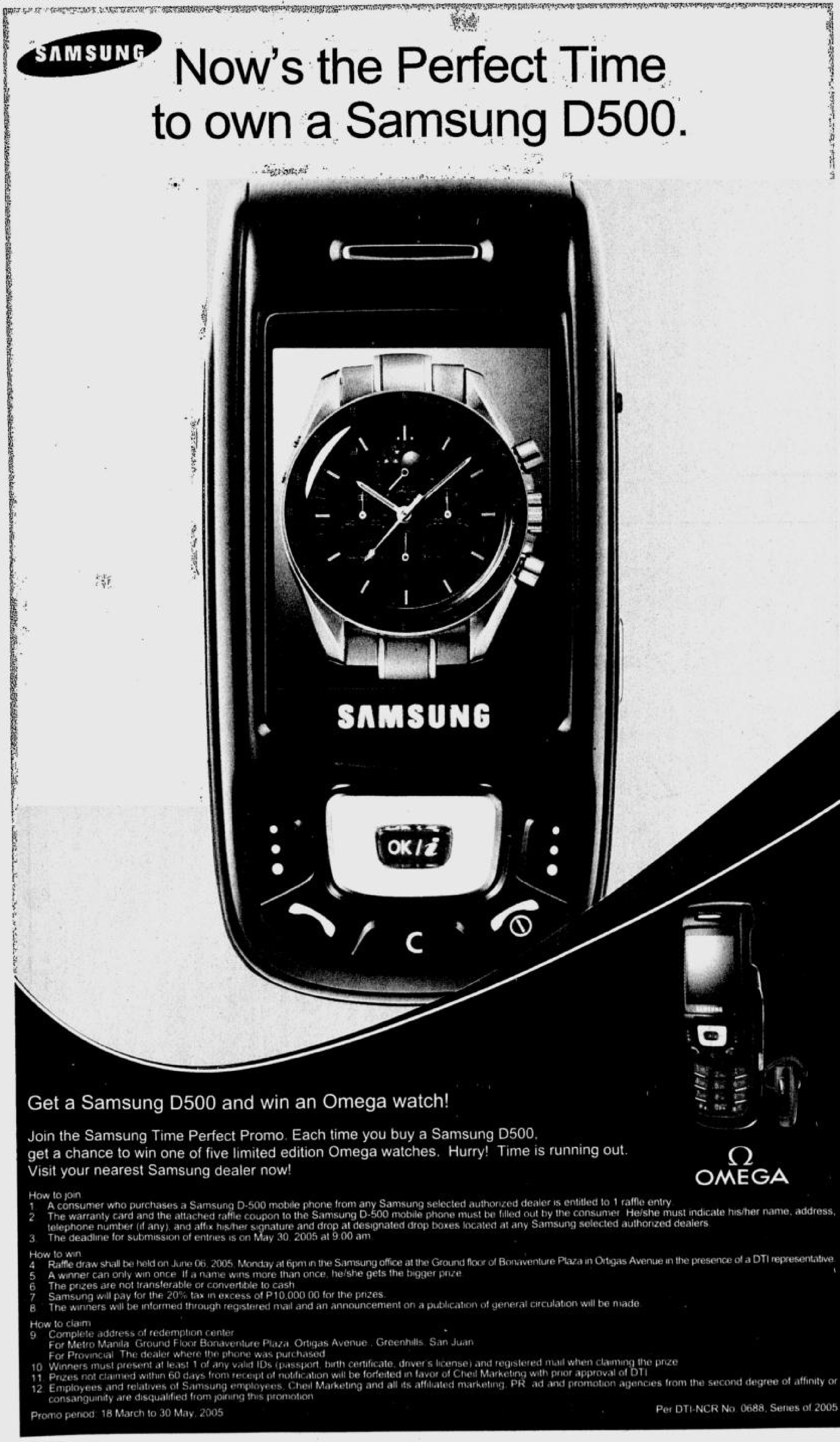
MOPS-based unleaded gasoline and diesel cost about $60-$70 a barrel compared to the Dubai crude average of slightly more than $50 a barrel.

With prices remaining volatile despite talks of another output hike by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries by 500,000 barrels per day, Concepcion said the COPW would religiously monitor international oil prices.

He said the COPW would also meet with the DOJ-DOE Task Force, specifically Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, to ensure that the public knew just how much local pump prices should increase retail prices to reflect the global price spikes.



THE CONSUMER and Oil Price Watch has questioned the basis of the last pump price increase of the local oil refining companies.



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1. A consumer who purchases a Samsung D-500 mobile phone from any Samsung selected authorized dealer is entitled to 1 raffle entry.
2. The warranty card and the attached raffle coupon to the Samsung D-500 mobile phone must be filled out by the consumer. He/she must indicate his/her name, address, telephone number (if any), and affix his/her signature and drop at designated drop boxes located at any Samsung selected authorized dealers.
3. The deadline for submission of entries is on May 30, 2005 at 9:00 am.

How to win
4. Raffle draw shall be held on June 06, 2005, Monday at 6pm in the Samsung office at the Ground floor of Bonaventure Plaza in Ortigas Avenue in the presence of a DTI representative.
5. A winner can only win once. If a name wins more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize.
6. The prizes are not transferable or convertible to cash.
7. Samsung will pay for the 20% tax in excess of P10,000.00 for the prizes.
8. The winners will be informed through registered mail and an announcement on a publication of general circulation will be made.

How to claim
9. Complete address of redemption center
   For Metro Manila: Ground Floor Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Avenue , Greenhills, San Juan
   For Provincial: The dealer where the phone was purchased
10. Winners must present at least 1 of any valid IDs (passport, birth certificate, driver's license) and registered mail when claiming the prize.
11. Prizes not claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of Cheil Marketing with prior approval of DTI.
12. Employees and relatives of Samsung employees, Cheil Marketing and all its affiliated marketing, PR, ad and promotion agencies from the second degree of affinity or consanguinity are disqualified from joining this promotion.

Promo period: 18 March to 30 May, 2005

Per DTI-NCR No. 0688, Series of 2005

Move to raise corporate tax rate criticized

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE JOINT Foreign Chambers yesterday criticized the proposed law raising the cap on corporate income tax from 32 percent to 35 percent, saying this ran counter to the trend in Asia of decreasing taxes on firms.

The proposal to raise the cap is contained in Senate Bill No. 1950, which the Senate ways and means committee approved last March 7, and was taken up during Congress' special session from March 30 and April 1.

The bill provides for an increase in corporate income taxes up to 2009, when the corporate income tax would be lowered to a maximum of 30 percent.

"We do not support (this because) the Asian regional trend is to lower rather than to raise corporate income taxes," the JFC said in a statement.

The group includes the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (Philippines), Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of the Philippines, Korean Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters.

The JFC went on to say that the trend was similar elsewhere in the world.

JFC said Philippine corporate income tax rates were already the highest in Southeast Asia.

"If the (proposal is enacted), the country would be less competitive and less attractive to foreign investors."

The group said: "Instead of raising taxes on foreign investors who are good corporate citizens, good employers and good taxpayers, the Philippines should concentrate on collecting existing taxes more efficiently, while raising the VAT to 12 percent and reducing VAT exemptions."

More airlines eye Clark flights

By Clarissa S. Batino

AT LEAST five more foreign budget and full-service airlines are planning to mount flights to and from Clark's Diosdado Macapagal International Airport.

These include leading Middle East carrier Emirates, Virgin Blue of Australia and Spring Airlines of China, according to CDC executive vice president Victor Jose Luciano.

The increasing interest of aviation players to operate in Clark has prompted the Clark Development Corp. to fast track plans of a P2-billion upgrade of the airport, which should begin this year.

"We are getting inquiries from a lot of airlines that are looking at Clark as one of their destinations. We already had initial talks with Virgin Blue and Spring of China," said Luciano.

Danilo Augusto Francia, president of Clark International Airport Corp. said that Emirates visited the Macapagal airport during the Holy Week to inspect the facilities.

He said the Clark airport agency also received an inquiry from another Singapore-based budget carrier, Valuair, following the entry of Tiger Airways that started flying to Clark last April 5.

Another no-frills player, Jetstar Asia, will begin flights from Singapore to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport within the month.

Luciano said an American full-service airline, which he refused to name, had also made inquiries about flying to the Central Luzon airport.

There are now three passenger carriers operating in Clark and the cargo lines of United Parcel Service.

Clark, according to Luciano, was ideal for budget airlines because the Macapagal airport charges lower fees and as an incentive, even agreed to waive aeronautical fees for the first six months.

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A MOST welcome Spanish conqueror /E2

LIFESTYLE

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

So you want to be a chef?

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

WHAT professional chef school do you recommend? I've been asked this question too often. It being the time of year when people decide on their future careers, I thought it best to tackle it.

Recommending a chef's school is a serious subject. I know the costs and considering that many of those who have inquired are parents, teens who desire to be chefs, people in search of a second career or those wanting to pursue their first love, it's quite a responsibility for me to take on the subject alone. I have to ensure that hard-earned money is well-spent and that respective dreams bear fruit.

So I asked fellow chefs, some of the most credible people in the industry, to answer this question:

If you were to go to a chef's school in the Philippines, where would you go and why?

For me the best way to determine a good school is by the quality of its graduates. I am waiting to see how ISCAHM graduates do.—**Fernando Aracama, UVA & Embassy**

I guess Norbert's School ISCAHM, CCA even HRM in selected universities.—**Ramon Antonio, Café Wien Group of Companies**

The school of Chef Gandler, I believe, is a good choice. The name is ISCAHM and no, I don't hold a share! Gandler is a great pro in cooking! We worked together during the opening of Shang Makati.—**Raimund Braun, Diamond Hotel**

To Norbert! He was my teacher and my mentor. He is a very good teacher and he inspired me a lot! —**Tony Boy Escalante, Antonio's**

ISCAHM! The best for the best! —**J. Gamboa, El Cirkulo and Milky Way**

Any school that teaches the fundamentals of classical cuisine at which I think Norbert Gandler and Hans Schallenberg do a great job.—**Jomi Gaston, Unilever Bestfoods Asia**

I would go to ISCAHM. How could you go wrong with Gandler, Babaran and Navarro as mentors?—**Quito Jose, Brothers Burger**

I prefer ISCAHM simply because the people behind the school know and are sure of what they are doing and have a lot of experience. This is just my honest opinion.—**Ariel Manuel, Lolo Dad's**

CHEF'S CHOICE. The ISCAHM Team (from left): Michael Oberle, Ernie Babaran, Uli Willimann, Norbert Gandler, Hans Schallenberg and Manoj de Silva

Norbert Gandler's ISCHAM! All the instructors are culinary experts and all of them went through the apprenticeship programs in Europe. It's the best culinary education in the country done the way it's done in Europe. —**Tony Palmero, Club Punta Fuego**

CCA. So far, they've produced fantastic young graduates whom I have worked with. They have a fantastic curriculum. A tad expensive but worth the price.— **Ed Quimson, Chef Ed's**

Personally, I would choose ISCHAM. I know the curriculum and the level of the instructors. The others I do not have enough knowledge about.—**Kurt Pozzato, Unilever Bestfoods Asia**

I'd go to ISCAHM of Norbert Gandler because you are taught by experienced and award winning professionals in the hotel and food industry.—**Beth Romualdez**

ISCHAM because the people running it are masters of the trade!—**Jessie Sincioco, Le Soufflé**

ISCHAM. The teachers are all professionals with many years of experience.—**Cyrille Soenen, Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila and Holiday Inn Galleria Manila**

I would go to Norbert Gandler's ISCHAM. Look at who his apprentices were while he was at the Mandarin—Ariel of Lolo Dad's, Tony Boy of Antonio's and Humphrey who now teaches at ISCHAM.—**Claude Tayag**

Do you have an easy recipe for baked fish with olive oil and lemon? I like my fish simple but delicious and looks great to serve for a dinner party too. Hosting a dinner Saturday.

VIVIAN J.

SO YOU/ C3

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Young Chefs SUMMER CAMP 2005

DATES: 1ST RUN April 18-22, 2005 2ND RUN May 2-6, 2005 3RD RUN May 16-20, 2005

KIDDIE KITCHEN
For Ages 7-11
Time: 8am - 12nn

DAY 1 - Rise And Shine
DAY 2 - Under The Sea
DAY 3 - Finger Lickin' Food
DAY 4 - Little Italy
DAY 5 - Fast Food Favorites

CLASSICAL COOKING & BAKING
For Ages 14-17
Time: 8am-5pm

DAY 1 - Soups & Classic Sauces
DAY 2 - Moist Heat Cooking
DAY 3 - Dry Heat Cooking
DAY 4 - Basic Breads
DAY 5 - Basic Cakes & Pastries

WESTERN CUISINE
For Ages 11-14
Time: 1pm – 5pm

DAY 1 - Mexican Cuisine
DAY 2 - American Cuisine
DAY 3 - French Cuisine
DAY 4 - Spanish Cuisine
DAY 5 - Italian Cuisine

ASIAN CUISINE
For Ages 11-14
Time: 8am - 12nn

DAY 1 - Thai & Vietnamese Cuisine
DAY 2 - Filipino Cuisine
DAY 3 - Chinese Cuisine
DAY 4 - Korean Cuisine
DAY 5 - Japanese Cuisine

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

BASIC PROFESSIONAL CULINARY & BAKING COURSE

This program is designed especially for novice chefs & culinary hobbyists who wish to professionalize their cooking & baking skills.

Schedule: Every Saturday and Sunday; 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Next Run is on April 16, 2005

INTERMEDIATE PROFESSIONAL BAKING AND PASTRY ARTS COURSE

This program is designed for culinary hobbyists & novice chefs who wish to further hone their skills in baking & pastry arts. Some sessions require pre-requisite courses from the Basic Professional Culinary & Baking Course.

Schedule: Every Saturday and Sunday; 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Next Run is on April 10, 2005

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Entrepreneurship in the Food Industry (EFI) is a 6-month program designed for students who are interested in establishing their own food service enterprises.

Schedule: Every Saturday and Sunday; 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Next Run is on June 2005

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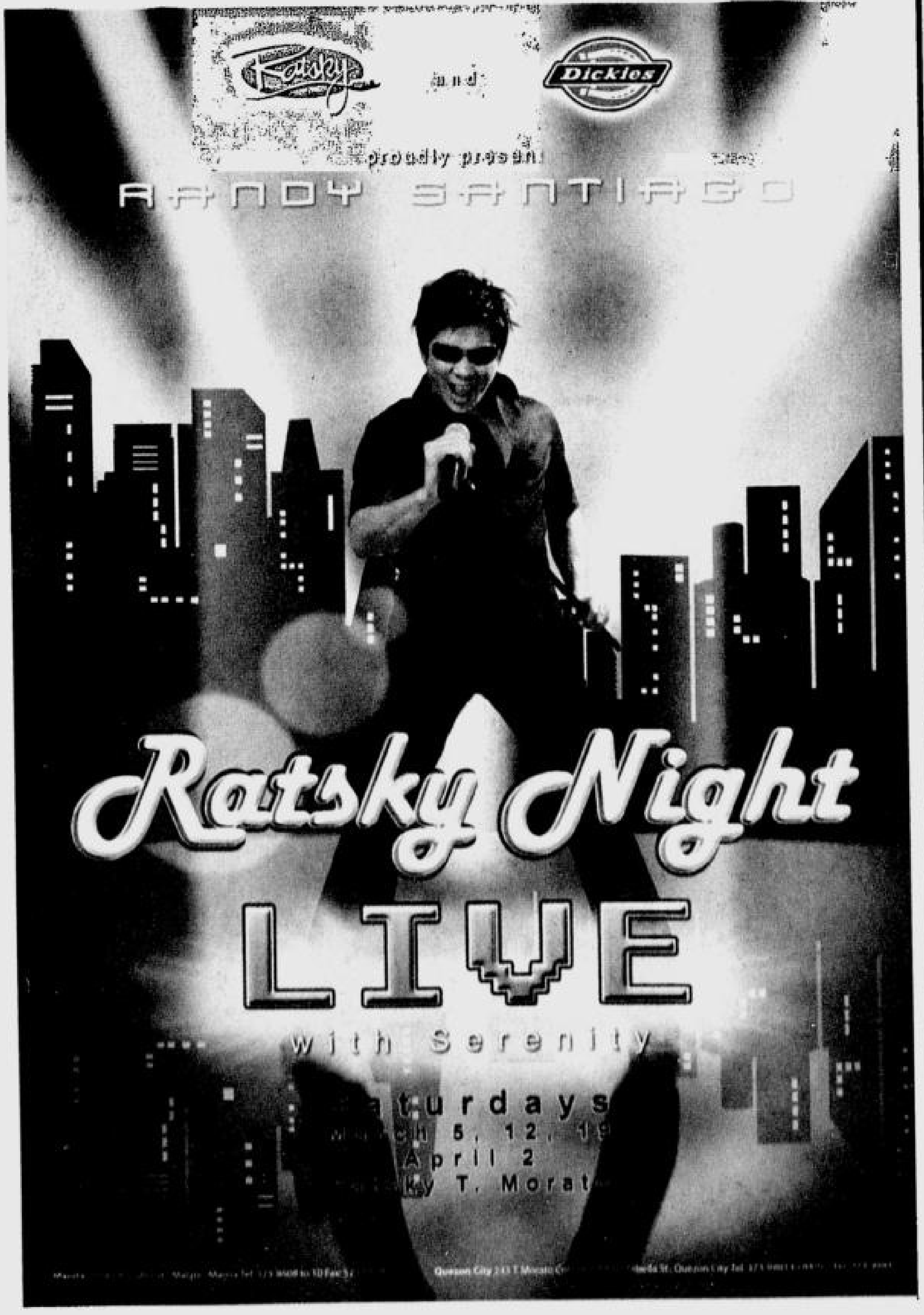

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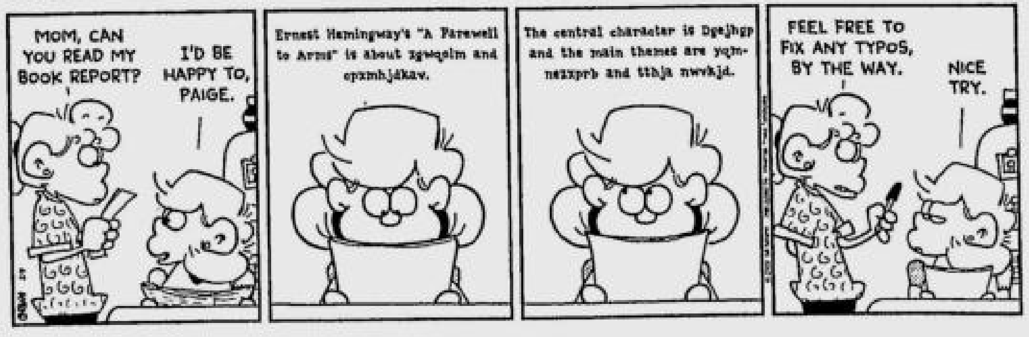
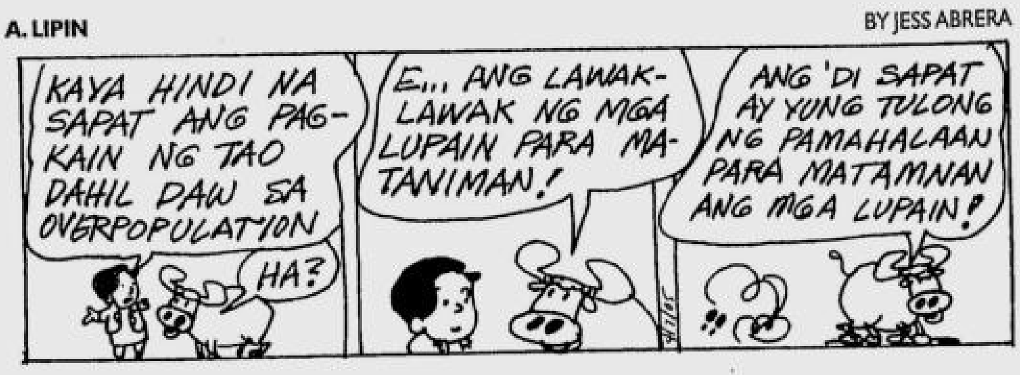
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


MOM, CAN YOU READ MY BOOK REPORT?
I'D BE HAPPY TO, PAIGE.
Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms" is about zgwqolm and epxmhjdkav.
The central character is Dgejhgp and the main themes are yqnnszxprb and tthja nwvkjd.
FEEL FREE TO FIX ANY TYPOS, BY THE WAY.
NICE TRY.

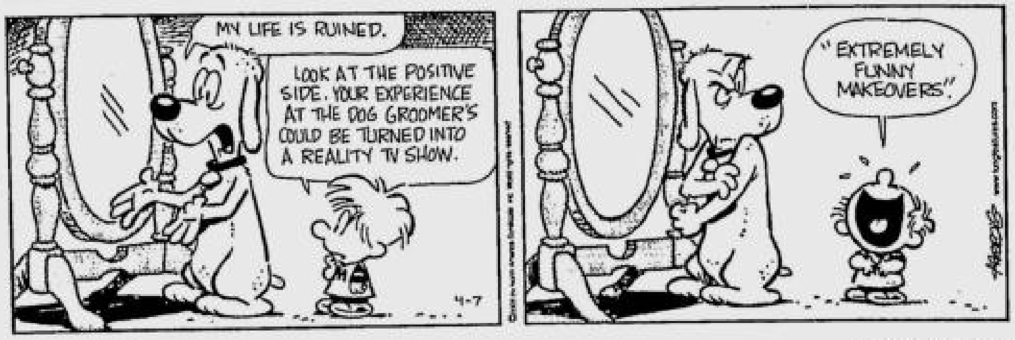
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KAYA HINDI NA SAPAT ANG PAGKAIN NG TAO DAHIL DAW SA OVERPOPULATION
HA?
E.., ANG LAWAK-LAWAK NG MGA LUPAIN PARA MATANIMAN!
ANG 'DI SAPAT AY YUNG TULONG NG PAMAHALAAN PARA MATAMNAN ANG MGA LUPAIN!

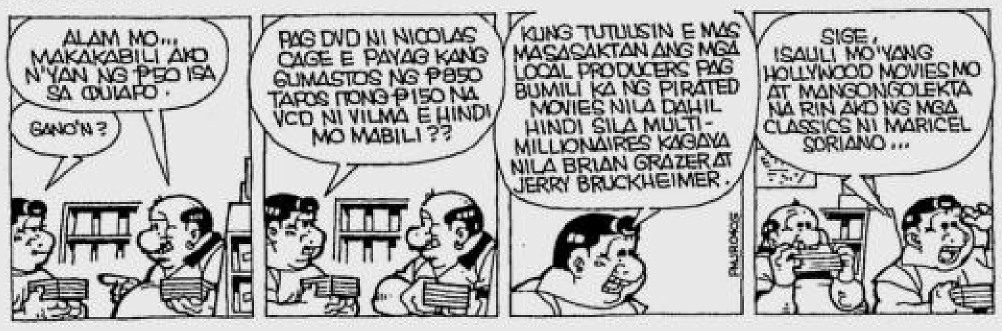
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


MY LIFE IS RUINED.
LOOK AT THE POSITIVE SIDE. YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THE DOG GROOMER'S COULD BE TURNED INTO A REALITY TV SHOW.
"EXTREMELY FUNNY MAKEOVERS"
4-7

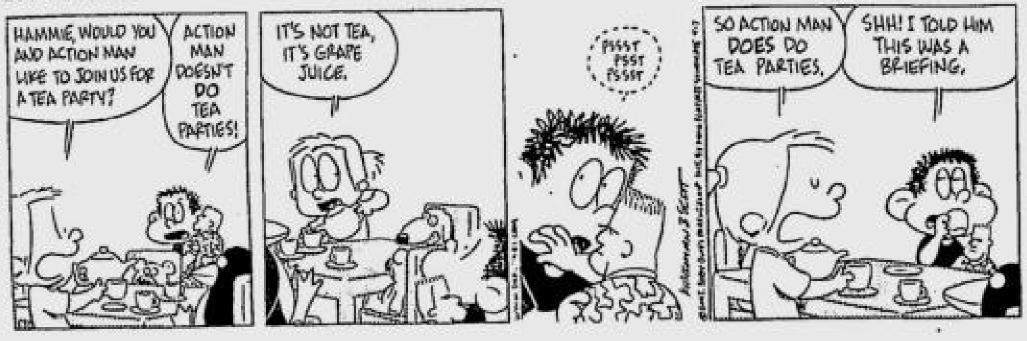
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ALAM MO... MAKAKABILI AKO N'YAN NG ₱50 ISA SA QUIAPO.
GANO'N?
PAG DVD NI NICOLAS CAGE E PAYAG KANG GUMASTOS NG ₱850 TAPOS ITONG ₱150 NA VCD NI VILMA E HINDI MO MABILI??
KUNG TUTUUSIN E MAS MASASAKTAN ANG MGA LOCAL PRODUCERS PAG BUMILI KA NG PIRATED MOVIES NILA DAHIL HINDI SILA MULTI-MILLIONAIRES KAGAYA NILA BRIAN GRAZER AT JERRY BRUCKHEIMER.
SIGE, ISAULI MO 'YANG HOLLYWOOD MOVIES MO AT MANGONGOLEKTA NA RIN AKO NG MGA CLASSICS NI MARICEL SORIANO...

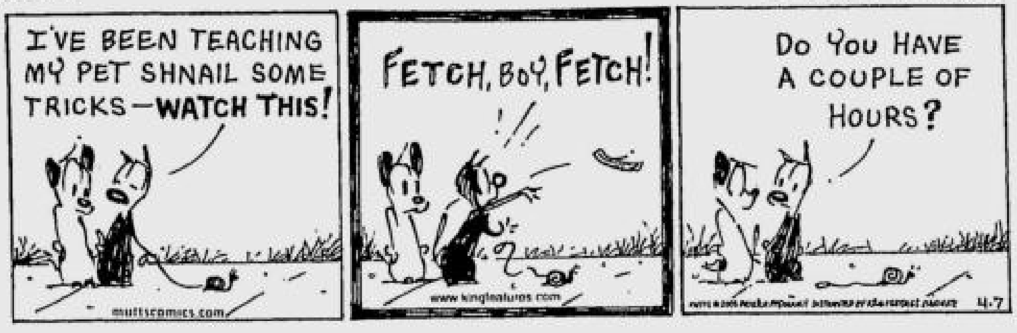
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE, WOULD YOU AND ACTION MAN LIKE TO JOIN US FOR A TEA PARTY?
ACTION MAN DOESN'T DO TEA PARTIES!
IT'S NOT TEA, IT'S GRAPE JUICE.
PSSST PSST PSSST
SO ACTION MAN DOES DO TEA PARTIES.
SHH! I TOLD HIM THIS WAS A BRIEFING.

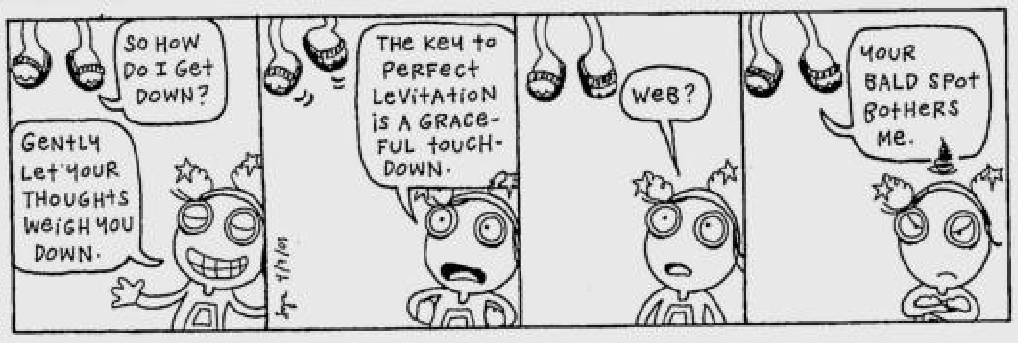
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'VE BEEN TEACHING MY PET SHNAIL SOME TRICKS—WATCH THIS!
FETCH, BOY, FETCH!
Do You HAVE A COUPLE OF HOURS?
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
4-7

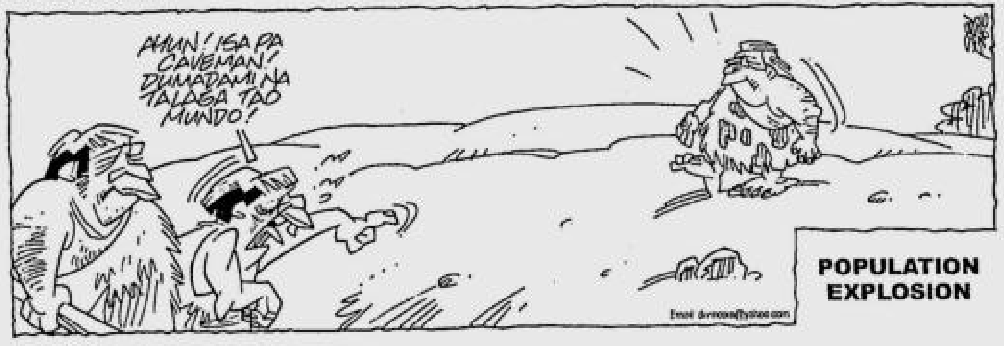
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


So How Do I Get Down?
Gently Let Your Thoughts Weigh You Down.
The Key to Perfect Levitation is A Graceful touch-Down.
Web?
Your BALD Spot Bothers Me.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


AHUN! ISA PA CAVEMAN! DUMADAMI NA TALAGA TAO MUNDO!
POPULATION EXPLOSION

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Essentially, you are a warrior. Nothing daunts you. Your energy is strong, positive and dynamic. Whatever you do, you do with concentration and enthusiasm. You sow your wild oats when you are younger, and eventually settle down later. You know how to inspire others. An important aspect of your life will finish or wrap up this year. (Get ready for something new.)
Birthdate of: Russell Crowe, actor; Janis Ian, musician; Jackie Chan, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a fabulous day to schmooze with friends and work with groups. You're in the right place at the right time saying the right thing to the right person.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can promote your career or your good name today. Whatever you do brings praise, a raise or good things your way.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a fabulous day to travel or to make travel plans. It also favors publishing and the media. It's a good day to sign up for courses or to attend school.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You seem to have a bottom-line idea about what to do today. You know how to deal with the possessions and wealth of others. You know how to handle your responsibilities very well today.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You can be quite influential with others today. Your enthusiasm will carry you along. People will follow you because you seem to know what you're doing.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You can be successful at work today simply because you believe you can be. It's the power of positive thinking. Act now; whatever you do can boost your earnings!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You definitely want to have fun today! You shine in the arts as well. Playful activities with children, plus romantic liaisons, are a wonderful source of fun today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The changes you make at home today will bring you a profit in the future. If they don't, they'll definitely benefit you in some way.

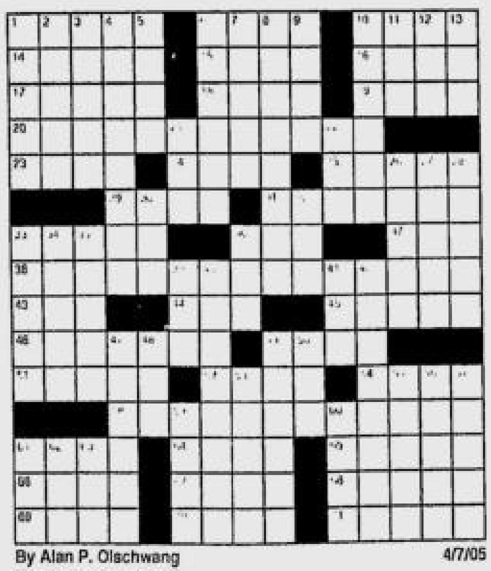
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're unusually persuasive and convincing today. This is a great day for sales, marketing, teaching, writing and influencing others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a wonderful day for business and commerce. Whatever you do seems to bring you a reward. Your ability to plan is excellent. Your enthusiasm attracts support for you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Whatever you do today, you can improve and advance your best interests. You want to grow in many ways. It's easy to be decisive and firm today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel safe and secure down deep inside. You have a warm feeling in your tummy. That's because, for whatever reason, you feel optimistic about your future.

DAILY CROSSWORD

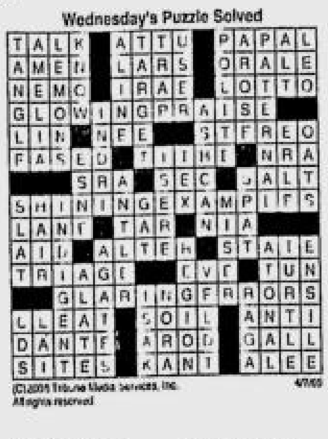


By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
4/7/05

ACROSS
1 Festive occasions
6 Variety of salmon
10 Dress line
14 Besieged site of 1836
15 October stone
16 Operatic showstopper
17 Gadabout
18 Nota __ (note well)
19 Angelic feature
20 Start of Emerson quote
23 Mata __
24 Banned apple spray
25 Vicinities
29 Copper coin
31 Sort
33 __ of roses
36 Old-time interjection
37 Light brown
38 Part 2 of quote
43 Bad leader?
44 Lennon's love
45 Carried on the wind
46 Main courses
49 Rental car company
51 Portfolio plus
52 Son of Leah
54 Hebrew month
58 End of quote
61 Creche threesome
64 Declare
65 Good Book
66 Wash-basin partner
67 Camera's eye
68 Shun
69 Kind of club
70 Latin being
71 Takes a siesta

DOWN
1 Wayne's "Wayne's World" cohort
2 Waikiki welcome
3 Rod of tennis
4 Grant Wood's "_ Gothic"
5 Nursing a grudge
6 Brittle metallic element
7 Massenet work
8 Banister element
9 Butter alternative
10 Majority of Mali
11 Important time
12 Trouble
13 Chinese revolutionary
21 Unnaturally pale
22 Distant
26 Go in
27 Another time
28 Have an inkling
30 Unit of work
32 Mars hue
33 Lost
34 Dilutes
35 Hues
36 Follies man Ziegfeld
39 Misery
40 Subjugates
41 Oriental sash
42 Precipitous plunge
47 Start drawing on the pension
48 DDE's command
49 Disinclined
50 Caesar's seven
53 Balances
55 Gray wolves
56 Dark
57 City SW of York
59 Robust
60 Skier's lift
61 Actress Ryan
62 Bell maker's tool
63 Holy cow!

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



TALK■ATTU■PAPAL
AMEN■LARS■ORALE
NEMO■IRAE■LOTTO
GLOWINGPRAISE■■
LIN■NEE■■STEREO
EASED■TITHE■NRA
■■■SRA■SEC■SALT
SHININGEXAMPLES
LANE■TAR■NIA■■■
AID■ALTER■STATE
TRIAGE■■EVE■TUN
■■GLARINGERRORS
CLEAT■SOIL■ANTI
DANTE■AROD■GALL
SITES■KANT■ALEE

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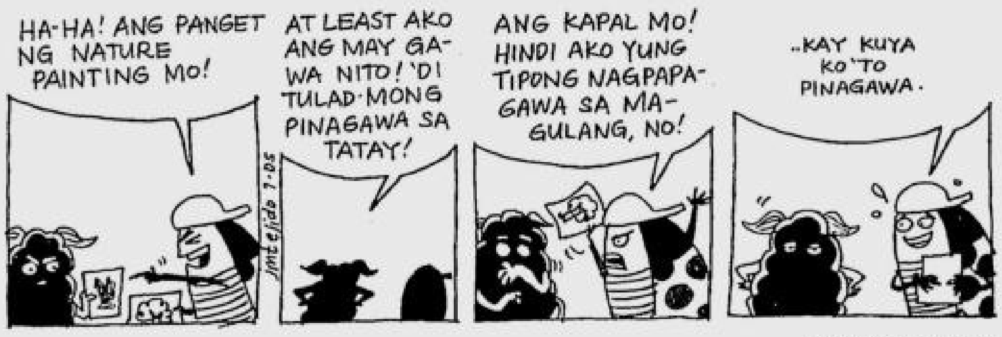
4/6/05

GASFAR
fuel saving tips
SIZE MATTERS IN CAR SELECTION
Choose an economical car. Small cars are more fuel efficient and produce lower emissions than large cars.

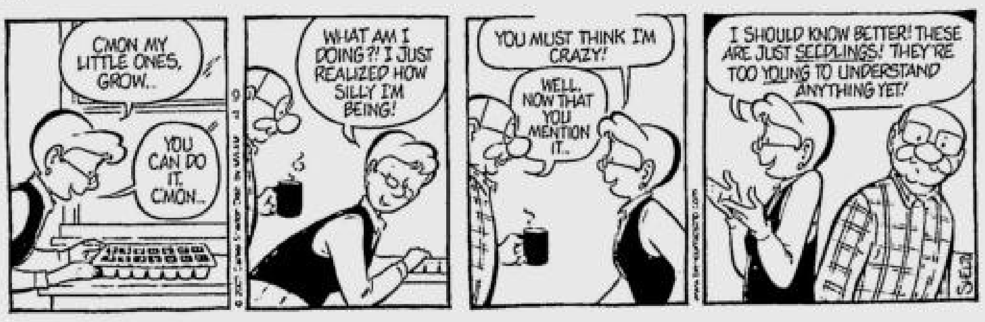
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HA-HA! ANG PANGET NG NATURE PAINTING MO!
AT LEAST AKO ANG MAY GAWA NITO! 'DI TULAD MONG PINAGAWA SA TATAY!
ANG KAPAL MO! HINDI AKO YUNG TIPONG NAGPAPAGAWA SA MAGULANG, NO!
..KAY KUYA KO 'TO PINAGAWA.

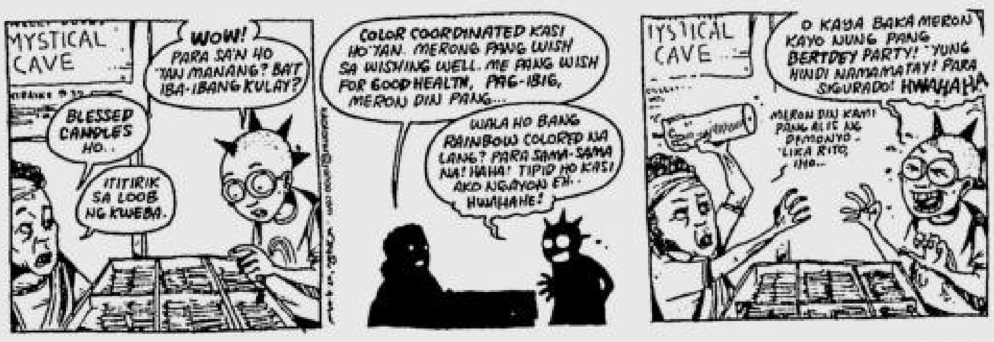
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


C'MON MY LITTLE ONES, GROW..
YOU CAN DO IT. C'MON..
WHAT AM I DOING?! I JUST REALIZED HOW SILLY I'M BEING!
YOU MUST THINK I'M CRAZY!
WELL, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT..
I SHOULD KNOW BETTER! THESE ARE JUST SEEDLINGS! THEY'RE TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND ANYTHING YET!

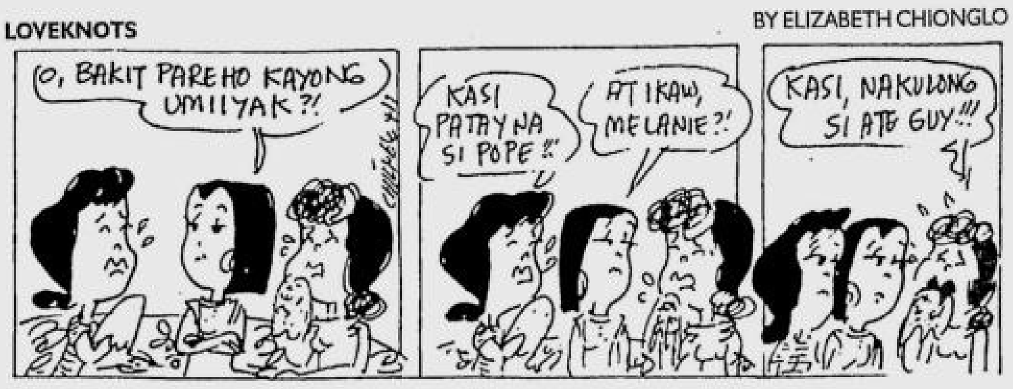
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MYSTICAL CAVE
WOW! PARA SA'N HO 'YAN MANANG? BAT IBA-IBANG KULAY?
BLESSED CANDLES HO..
ITITIRIK SA LOOB NG KWEBA.
COLOR COORDINATED KASI HO 'YAN. MERONG PANG WISH SA WISHING WELL. ME PANG WISH FOR GOOD HEALTH, PAG-IBIG, MERON DIN PANG...
WALA HO BANG RAINBOW COLORED NA LANG? PARA SAMA-SAMA NA! HAHA! TIPID HO KASI AKO NGAYON EH. HWAHAHE!
MYSTICAL CAVE
O KAYA BAKA MERON KAYO NUNG PANG BERTDEY PARTY! 'YUNG HINDI NAMAMATAY! PARA SIGURADO! HWAHAHA
MERON DIN KAMI PANG ALIS NG DEMONYO - 'LIKA RITO, IHO..

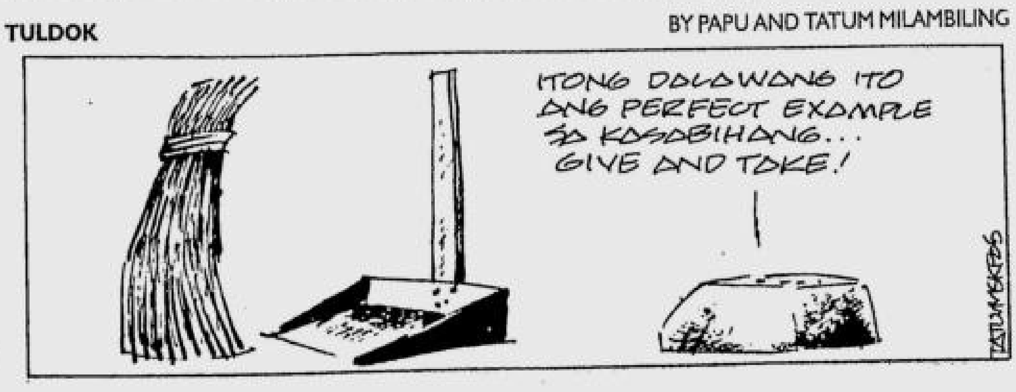
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


O, BAKIT PAREHO KAYONG UMIIYAK?!
KASI PATAY NA SI POPE?!
AT IKAW, MELANIE?!
KASI, NAKULONG SI ATE GUY!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ITONG DALAWANG ITO ANG PERFECT EXAMPLE SA KASABIHANG... GIVE AND TAKE!

SSS suspends deposits to inactive accounts

THE CONSUMER
Marietta Velasco Giron

THE SOCIAL Security System (SSS) said recently it planned to suspend 21,000 pensioners' accounts in various banks that had been dormant for more than a year.

Under the current SSS system, a pensioner's monthly checks are deposited to the recipient's personal bank account.

So if you're one of these retirees who are not touching their monthly pensions for one reason or another, prove you're still alive or your monthly benefits may be suspended or canceled.

According to SSS chief executive officer Corazon de la Paz, pensioners have to comply with certain verification requirements.

SSS conducted a census last year as part of its Annual Confirmation of Pensioners program or ACOP aimed at removing from its list pensioners who have died, remarried or have recovered from their disabilities.

De la Paz says there are three types of pensioners: retiree, survivor of deceased SSS member and member with total disability. SSS members who reach 65 years of age, whether actively employed or not, are qualified to receive retirement pension.

She says the pension is stopped under three conditions: when the retiree dies, when the survivor remarries and when the ailing member recovers from total disability.

"If found guilty, persons who fraudulently withdrew pensions would be fined between P5,000 to P20,000 and imprisoned from 6 years to 12 years," she warns. Fraudulent withdrawal or encashment of pensioner's check is a violation of Section 28 of Republic Act 8282.

Right now, there are 1,024,965 SSS pensioners. More than half are retirees and surviving spouses.

De la Paz is asking families to report the condition of pensioners who are sick or too weak to make the confirmation personally. In such cases, the SSS will send representatives to visit the pensioners.

Pensioners living abroad can send a photocopy of their passport (first two pages showing name, photo and signature of member) and other identification cards (not more than three years old) such as driver's permit or license issued by the Professional Regulation Commission.

SSS announced recently that bank tellers and regular employees who had worked at SSS for at least five years could now certify that a pensioner was eligible to continue receiving pension. The latest move, according to an SSS spokesperson, was expected to decongest SSS offices and facilitate verification procedures.

Expired SSS checks

Elena Fernandez and Corazon Gordon, both residents of California, complained that the checks mailed to them by SSS expired 90 days after they were issued and the process of having new ones issued was one big hassle.

Fernandez recounted her own experience. "Feb. 4, I went to the main post office in Sta. Monica to get the registered check. I immediately deposited it to my bank where I was told that collection would take 6-8 weeks.

"On Feb. 24, I received a call from the bank saying the check was returned due to Philippine National Bank requirement of 'proof of permanent residence abroad... duly authenticated by Philippine embassy or consulate.' When I was resubmitting the check with the required documents, the bank said the checks had expired!

"To think that my sister and I already submitted the same documents to SSS when we filed our claims last year. Now, we are being required to submit a new set, again! They don't realize that here in the US, we have to file for special leave from work to get these documents, not to mention paying documentation and legal fees. Bank service fees are evidently also being deducted from the checks even before we get them!"

E-mail the author at giron@mailstation.net-tion.net

So you want to be a chef?

From page C1

This is it—nice, simple and looks great for a dinner party, too. You can use either whole fish or fillets of sea bass, salmon, snapper or grouper.

Rosemary Baked

1 whole fish, scaled, gutted, scored (approx. 1.5-2 k)
¼ c extra virgin olive oil
¼ c chives
½ c green onion
1 sprig each fresh tarragon, thyme, basil and rosemary, chopped
2 tsp each salt and pepper
Juice of 2 lemons, extra wedges for garnish

Season fish with salt and pepper. Transfer to a baking dish, and drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice. Top fish with herbs and bake covered with foil in a 350 pre-heated oven for 30 minutes.

Remove foil and continue to bake fish for 15 minutes or until a knife can be inserted into flesh with no resistance. Before serving, drizzle with 2 tbsp more of olive oil. Garnish with lemon and fresh herbs.

Bits and pieces

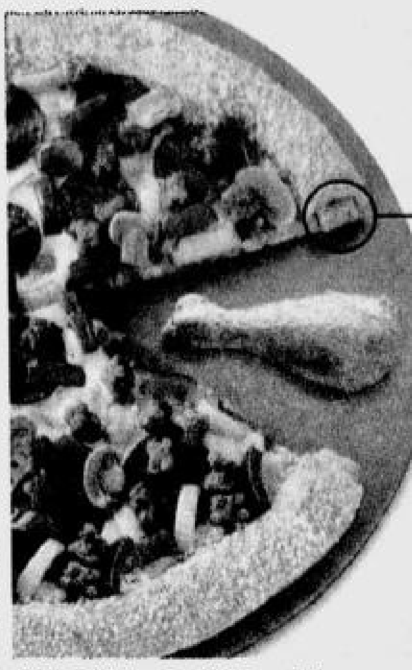
Giant crabs—My favorite crabs from Mio & Mau's crab fattening farm in Surigao are flown into Manila twice a week now ! This is about the only kind I enjoy eating. This one is well worth the fishy smell on your fingers and the tedious shelling process. More meat than shell or cartilage and deliciously sweet! Call Mrs. Ferrer now at 0927-9147088.

White Salad from Angeles—Tried this last Sunday, and if you're sick of the regular homemade fruit salad, you should try it, too. A delicious Pinoy twist to an all-time favorite! Nice and refreshing. Call Doren Tayag at 0917-5312712.

Yes, I'm teaching the whole month of April. Call 9289296 for my schedule.

For comments or suggestions, text 0917-8399888.

Chicken in your pizza



FRIED Chicken Stuffed Crust Pizza

PIZZA Hut introduces Fried Chicken Stuffed Crust Pizza.

Pizza Hut vice president for marketing Elaine Guzman said, in the new pizza, chicken was baked into the crust.

She noted that fried chicken was one of the Filipinos' favorite meals. With this product, diners could have both chicken and pizza.

Fried Chicken Stuffed Crust Pizza can be enjoyed with Pizza Hut's Dine-In Feast for 2. For just P329, get one regular Hawaiian Fried Chicken Stuffed Crust Pizza, two orders of cream of mushroom soup, four pieces Cheese Puffs and two glasses of Pepsi and save P130.

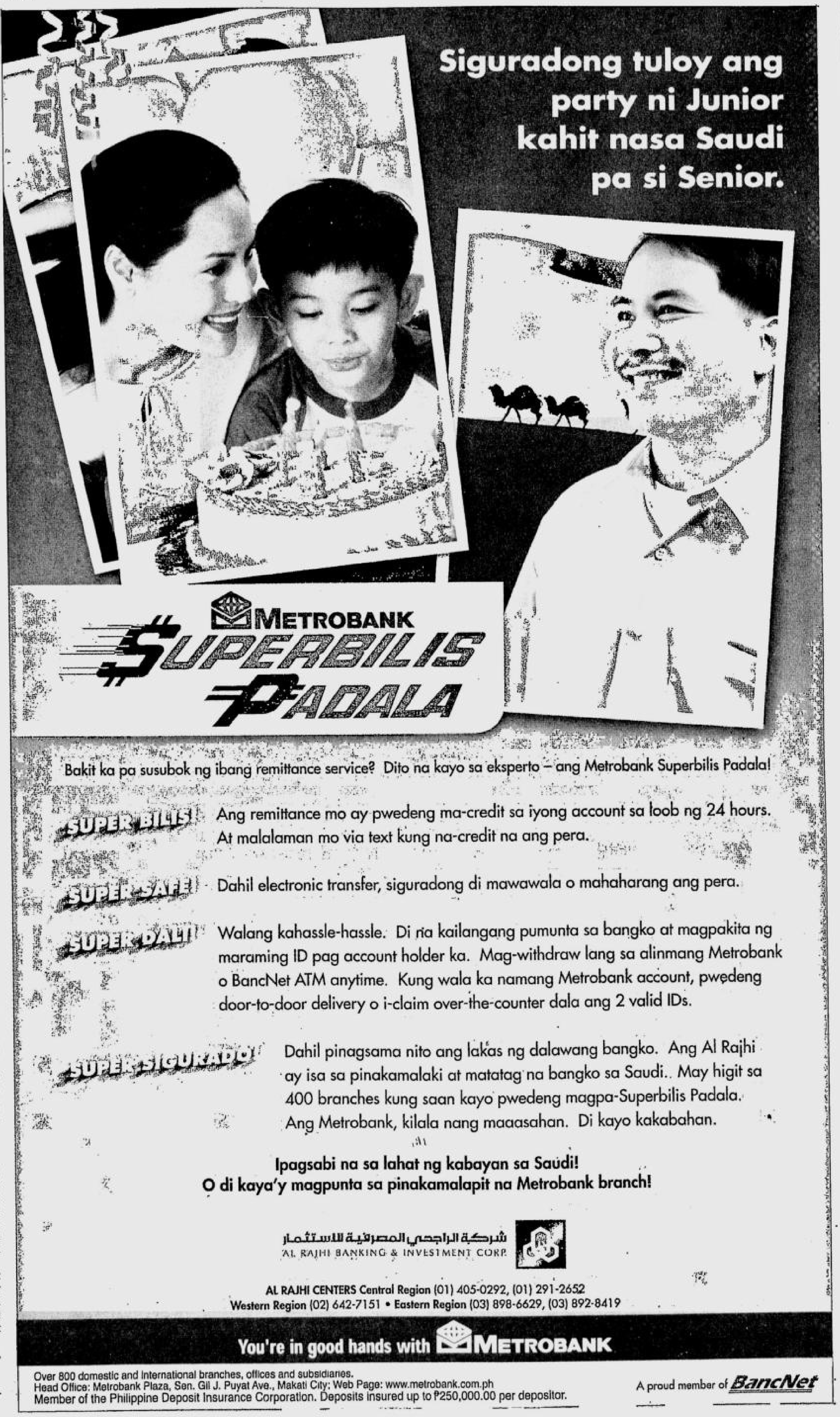
The offer is good until April 11 and is available at all Pizza Hut restaurants nationwide.

Cooking classes in Davao, Cebu

THE CCAC (Chinese Culinary Arts Center) will conduct a cooking class April 17-28 at the Mandarin Tea Garden-Guerrero branch in Davao City.

Ongoing until April 15 is a cooking class at the Diplomat Hotel in Cebu City.

Call (032) 2530099 (Cebu) and (082) 2241255 or (082) 2441227 (Davao); or 0922-8221688 or 0926-7441090.


Siguradong tuloy ang party ni Junior kahit nasa Saudi pa si Senior.
METROBANK
SUPERBILIS PADALA
SUPER BILIS!
SUPER SAFE!
SUPER DALI!
SUPER SIGURADO!

Bakit ka pa susubok ng ibang remittance service? Dito na kayo sa eksperto – ang Metrobank Superbilis Padala!

Ang remittance mo ay pwedeng ma-credit sa iyong account sa loob ng 24 hours. At malalaman mo via text kung na-credit na ang pera.

Dahil electronic transfer, siguradong di mawawala o mahaharang ang pera.

Walang kahassle-hassle. Di na kailangang pumunta sa bangko at magpakita ng maraming ID pag account holder ka. Mag-withdraw lang sa alinmang Metrobank o BancNet ATM anytime. Kung wala ka namang Metrobank account, pwedeng door-to-door delivery o i-claim over-the-counter dala ang 2 valid IDs.

Dahil pinagsama nito ang lakas ng dalawang bangko. Ang Al Rajhi ay isa sa pinakamalaki at matatag na bangko sa Saudi.. May higit sa 400 branches kung saan kayo pwedeng magpa-Superbilis Padala. Ang Metrobank, kilala nang maaasahan. Di kayo kakabahan.

Ipagsabi na sa lahat ng kabayan sa Saudi!
O di kaya'y magpunta sa pinakamalapit na Metrobank branch!

شركة الراجحي المصرفية للاستثمار
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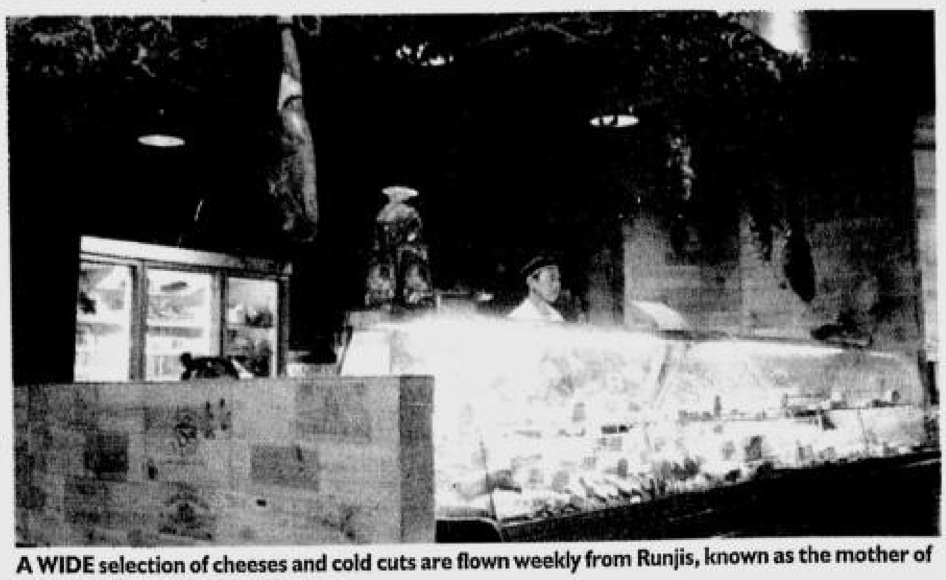
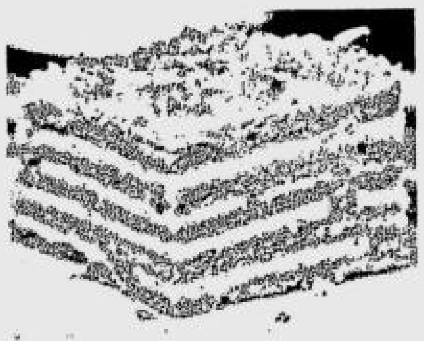


A WIDE selection of cheeses and cold cuts are flown weekly from Runjis, known as the mother of all markets in Paris.

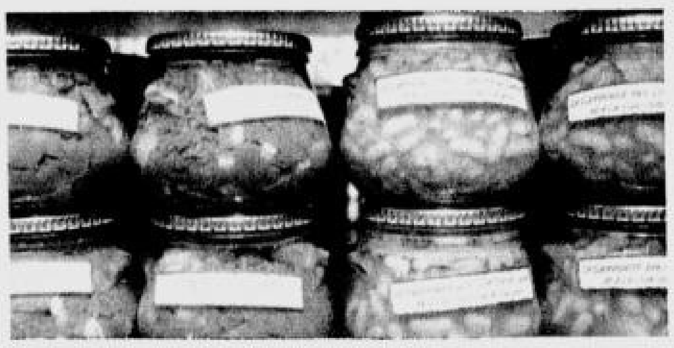
THE DELI has a complete line of gourmet Spanish food.

A most welcome Spanish conqueror

Juan Carlos de Terry's conquest of Filipino foodies starts with his new restaurant-deli at the Podium that's filled with food and wine from Europe



TARTA Imperial Rusa. The original Russian tart became the sans rival.



PRESERVED goods

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

IN 1972, a young Spaniard, Juan Carlos de Terry, was impressed by the Filipinos' extraordinary appreciation for Spanish food. Back then, he recalls, produce from Spain was shipped to the country only once a year, usually during the Christmas season.

A large crowd, he says, eagerly awaited the arrival of the ship carrying the goods. The crowd consisted of families, and their friends and neighbors; children, adults, and teens. Some waiter in their convertibles, others stood under a shade as they shared stories, mingled, laughed.

The atmosphere was like a typical scene in an old Filipino plaza.

When it was time for the goods to be distributed, a man would emerge from the crowd, remembers De Terry, excitedly waving in the air his prized possession, and exclaiming: "I have *chorizo* from Pamplona! I have *chorizo* from Pamplona!"

De Terry did not understand what the fuzz was about. For him, *chorizo* from Pamplona was as common in Spain as *pan de sal* was in the Philippines. Yet, the man was so happy to finally get his hands on the *chorizo* after waiting the whole year that he, curiously enough, shared it with everyone.

This vivid memory taught De Terry two things about Filipinos: their love for Spanish cuisine and their desire to share food.

Long overdue

With this memory tucked in his heart, De Terry opened, 28 long years later, the first Terry Selection: The Gourmet Store, on Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City. Recently, Terry Selection opened another branch, with an intimate restaurant in one corner, at the lower ground level of The Podium, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.

Indeed, says De Terry, his Filipino clients often come in groups, sharing six or seven different orders, capping a meal with the recommended wine. Filipinos are very willing to try new dishes, even if many of them don't know how to pronounce an entrée, he says.

Ingredients used in De Terry's kitchen are all sourced from the deli, he says, except of course when the menu calls for fresh fish or meat.

De Terry cooks as well. If the customers like a particular cuisine, gourmet De Terry willingly gives them the recipe, and even takes time to explain how to cook the dish—no secrets here. This is his way of keeping his customers loyal. If they get the recipe right and cook the dish the way it should be in their own kitchen, he says they will come back for more.

"Every product in the store is my selection, that's why it's called Terry Selection," he says.

He is no ordinary shopkeeper, mind you, for De Terry has a Ph.D. in oenology, the science of vinioulture or the study of wine. That's why it's no surprise that there are more than 500 of the best wines in the world, from the vintage 1994 Grand Vin Chateau de Latour valued at almost P30,000 to whites and reds that, at P270, give excellent value for money.

Coming from Argentina, Chile, South Africa, Spain, France, Italy and everywhere else, De Terry's personal selection speaks volumes about his discriminating taste—and wine sense. There are no American wines in this Spaniard's deli.

Overpriced

Not that California wines are bad, he says. In fact, Robert Mondavi, one of California's popular viniculturist and wine producer, is his friend. However, he thinks US wines give the "worst value for money." They are good, he says, but overpriced.

To ensure quality, De Terry himself frequents food fairs abroad, meets up with suppliers if they are new, and checks their factory or cellar before bringing the products to the Philippines. He has dealt with some suppliers for close to 40 years now, since his days in Mexico when he had a gourmet line.

"I know where to order the best—the best value for money from the most honest producers. I do not import anything if I am not convinced of its quality," he says.

Widest cheese selection

His selection of cheeses, one of the widest in town with more than 100 varieties, is sourced from countries where there's good production of milk—sheep, cow or goat, or a combination—such as France, Italy, Spain, Germany, United Kingdom, etc.

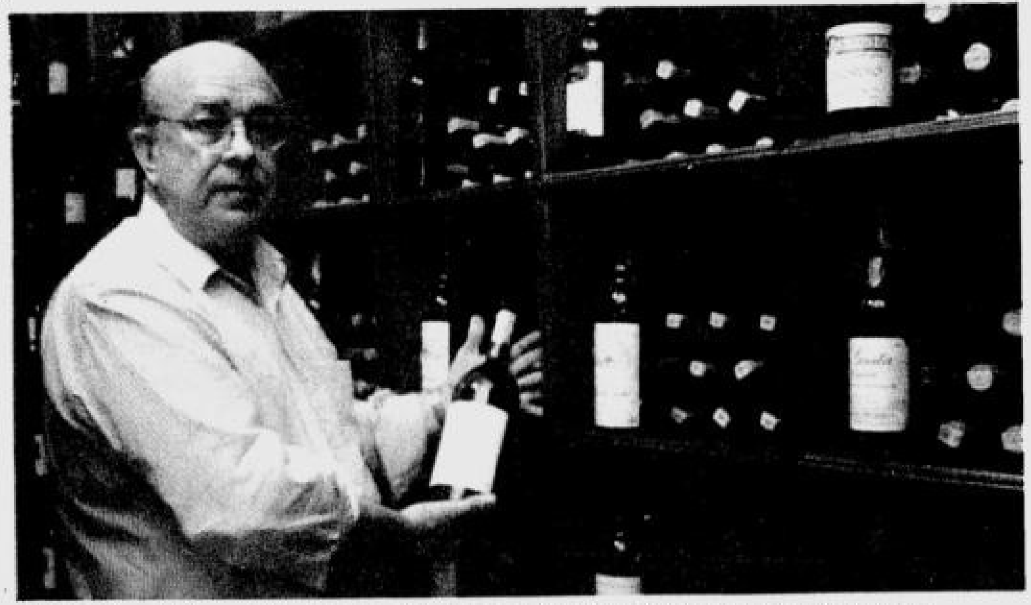
The most expensive is the 2- to 3-year-old Parmesan at P2,300 per kilo. Terry Selection also has excellent raclette, Gruyere, Edam, boccardo, cambozola, Brie, feta, marroille, Gouda, emmental, Camembert and so much more. "These cheeses are 'alive,' especially the non-pasteurized ones. (They have) live microorganisms," he says.

Terry Selection has cold cuts from Europe; an impressive line of choice Spanish gourmet food, from herbs, mushrooms, olives, pimientos to popular paella and *jamon*. Unique items include penne with cacao pasta, wine vinegar with garlic chili rosemary, sugar-free *turrones*, cook-it-yourself paella and *paellera* in varying sizes, and truffle oils. It also has a good range of olive oils, etc.

The deli has the original recipe for Sans Rival, a tart originally created in Russia, with almonds and cognac. De Terry says the tart found its way here when a chef from Spain attempted to make one during the 19th century. When the Spanish chef couldn't find almonds, he substituted cashew nuts. Since cognac was not yet available, rum was used as substitute.

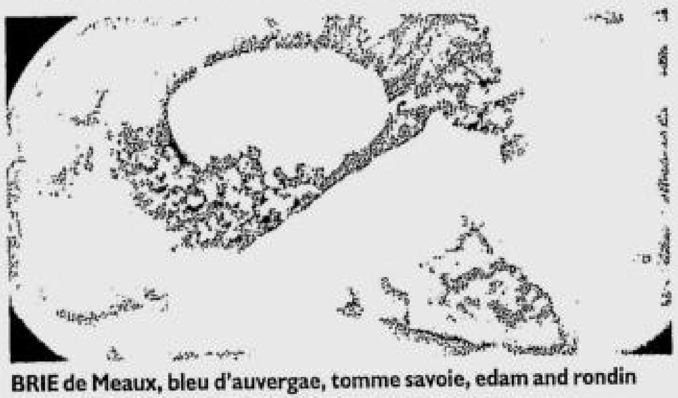
"I like the history of things—from wines to food to cheeses and desserts. I tell these interesting stories to curious customers whenever I can," De Terry says. A great marketing tool, no doubt.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph



JUAN Carlos de Terry and his selection of fine wines at the temperature-controlled cellar of the delicatessen.

JAMON serrano, chorizo salamanca mild, Milano salami, beef pastrami, familia reserva ham and longanisa catalana



BRIE de Meaux, bleu d'auvergae, tomme savoie, edam and rondin white, six-month-old manchego

Value sandwich meals

DINING OUT

SPAMJAM Café now serves Value Meals, a choice of three sandwiches that showcase Spam luncheon meat's versatility and goodness, with a beverage and free sidings. The Spamburger Hamburger is grilled sliced Spam luncheon meat between a lightly toasted Dutch Crunch bun (plain, P79; with cheese, P89; or with cheese and mushrooms, P95). The Spam Hero, a hearty sandwich of Spam luncheon meat, cheese and tomato, for only P135. Spam luncheon meat lovers may also enjoy two sandwiches in one sitting with Spamjam Club, a sandwich served in a special large two-layer Dutch Crunch Bread—one layer is topped with a rich egg salad with fried Spam bits. The second layer is topped with grilled Spam luncheon meat and cheese, for only P145. All sandwiches come with 12 oz. iced tea and a choice of free sidings: Curly Fries (coated with Cajun), Nuggets (Spam luncheon meat cut into wedges and deep-fried), or Poppers (potato balls with cubed Spam luncheon meat filling). The many ways to prepare and enjoy Spam luncheon meat are exhibited by Spamjam Café outlets at Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City and at the 4/L, Robinsons Galleria. Call 7527294 or 6349082.

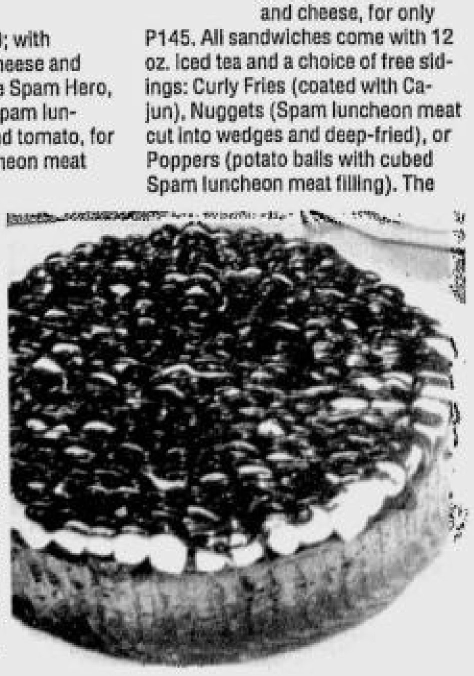
THE PALM Court Cafe presents an all-you-can-eat seafood dinner featuring Tiger Shrimp Cocktail, Fresh Oysters, Lobster Terrine, Bouillabaisse Marseillaise, Shrimp Tempura, Roasted Gindara, Baked Salmon and more. The Seafood Friday Night Buffet costs P950++ per person. International buffet is offered daily featuring fresh oysters, sashimi, cold cuts, Caesar salad, roast prime ribs, roast whole turkey, shrimp tempura and others at P850++ per person for lunch or dinner. Children 6-10 years old get a 50-percent discount, and kids 5 years old and below dine for free.

THE WESTERN Theater Kitchen at Circles Event Café showcases Italian and American cuisines. It offers different kinds of soup, freshly-baked bread and pizza, risotto with different toppings, and different pastas, as well as US Prime Roast with potatoes and vegetables. Circles Event Café is at the lobby level of Makati Shangri-La. Call 8138888 locals 7588 or 7599.

SULO Hotel presents "Happy Happy Hour" at the Diwata Lounge, 5:30-8 p.m. and the Lobby Lounge, 9-11 p.m. Enjoy free pica-pica buffet, with 50-percent discount on standard drinks and 25-percent discount on premium drinks. Call 9245051 to 71 locals 674 and 672.

ENJOY Happy Hour and eat-all-you-can *tapas* at the Hyatt Regency hotel's famed Calesa Bar. For the whole month of April, 6-9 p.m., patrons can avail of the special package of drink-all-you-can local beer and *tapas* buffet that includes some all-time favorite pica-pica. The beer and *tapas* bar treat is priced at P550++ per person. Call 8331234 loc. 81423.

UCC Coffee's all-time favorite desserts—Blueberry Cheesecake, Tiramisu, Apple Crumb Pie ala Mode and Choco Fudge Cake—are all on the menu of UCC branches located at Tomas Morato, Quezon City; Connecticut St., Greenhills; The Podium, Ortigas Center; Forbes Town Center, Taguig City; and Paseo Center, Makati City. Opening soon is UCC Westgate Center, Alabang.



SULO Hotel's cake of the month, Mudpie Cake. A bittersweet chocolate cake with moist and chewy fudge, crowned with soft marshmallows and drizzled with a warm chocolate topping. Call 9245051 to 71 locals 672 and 673.

RICH Risotto at the Western Theater Kitchen Circles Event Café, Makati Shangri-La